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THE ALTO STOOD LOOKING STEADILY AT DOT.

HOW DOT HEARD "THE MESSIAH"

BY

HEZEKIAH BUTTERWORTH

And other stories by famous authors



ILLUSTRATED

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HOW DOT HEARD "THE MESSIAH."

THE church was vast and dim. The air was fragrant with pine boughs, and over the golden cross of the chancel hung heavy wreaths of box and fir. A solitary light shone in front of the organ.

Little feet were heard on the stairs leading to the orchestra. A door in the organ case opened quietly and was about to close, when a voice was heard:

"Is that you, Dot?"

"Yes, sir."

"What makes you come so early? It is nearly an hour before the rehearsal begins. I should think the little bellows room would be a rather lonely place to wait an hour."

"I always come early," said the boy, timidly.

"So I have noticed. Why?"

"Mother thinks it best."

"Come out here, and let me talk with you. I have sung in the choir nearly a year, and have hardly had a glimpse of you yet. Don't be bashful! Why, all the music would stop if it were not for you, Dot. Our grandest Christmas anthem would break into confusion if you were to cease to *blow*. Come here. I have just arrived in the city, and have come to the church to wait for the hour of rehearsal. I want company. Come, Dot."

The little side door of the organ moved: a shadow crept along in the dim light towards the genial-hearted Tenor.

"Do you like music, Dot?"

"Yes, sir."

"Is that what makes you come so long before the rest?"

"No, sir."

"What is it, then?"

"I have a reason—mother would not like to have me speak of it."

"Do you sing?"

"Yes, at home."

"What do you sing?"

"The parts I hear you sing."

"Tenor, then?"



DOT.

"Yes."

"Will you sing for me?"

"Now?"

"Yes."

"I will sing, '*Hark, what mean?*'"

"Rossini—an adaptation from *Cujus Animam.*"

The boy did not understand.

"Well," said the Tenor, "I beat time—now, Dot."

A flute-like voice floated out into the empty edifice, silvery, pure, rising and falling through all the melodious measures of that almost seraphic melody. The Tenor leaped to his feet, and stood like one entranced. The voice fell in wavy cadences: "*Heavenly Hallelujahs rise.*" Then it rose clear as a skylark, with the soul of inspiration in it:

> "*Hear them tell that sacred story,*
> *Hear them chant—*"

The Tenor with a nervous motion turned on the gas-light.

The boy seemed affrighted, and shrank away towards the little door that led to the bellows room

"Boy!"

"Sir?"

"There is a fortune in that voice of yours."

"Thank you, sir."

"What makes you hide behind that bench?"

"You won't tell, sir?"

"No: I will befriend any boy with a voice like *that*."

The boy approached the singer and stood beside him.

He said not a word, but only looked toward his feet.

The Tenor's eyes followed the boy's.

He saw it all, but he only said tenderly:

"Dot!"

A chancel door opened. An acolyte came in, bearing a long gas-lighter: he touched the chandeliers and they burst into flame. The cross glimmered upon the wall under the Christmas wreaths; the alabaster font revealed its beautiful decorations of calla lilies and smilax; the organ glowed with its tall pipes, and carvings and cherubs.

The first flash of light in the chancel found Dot hidden in his little room with the door fast closed behind him.

What a strange place it was! A dim light fell through the open carvings of the organ case. Great wooden pipes towered aloft with black mouths — like

dragons. Far, far above in the arch was a cherub, without a body — a golden face with purple wings. Dot had looked at it for hours, and wondered.

He sat looking at it to-night with a sorrowful face. There were other footsteps in the church, sounds of light happy voices.

Presently the bell tinkled. The organist was on his bench. Dot grasped the great wooden handle; it moved up and down, up and down, and then the tall wooden pipes with the dragon mouths began to thunder around him. Then the chorus burst into a glorious strain, which Dot the year before had heard the organist say was the "Midnight Mass of the Middle Ages:"

"Adeste fideles
Laeti triumphantes,
Venite,
Venite,
In Bethlehem!"

The great pipes close at hand ceased to thunder. The music seemed to run far away into the distance, low, sweet and shadowy. There were sympathetic solos and tremulous chords. Then the tempest seemed to come back again, and the luminous arch

over the organ sent back into the empty church the jubilant chorus:

"*Venite adoremus,*
Venite adoremus,
Venite adoremus,
Dominium."

After the anthem there were solos. The Tenor sang one of them, and Dot tried to listen to it as he moved the handle up and down. How sweet it sounded to Dot's ears! It came from a friendly heart — except his mother's it was the only voice that had ever spoken a word of sympathy or praise to the poor bellows boy.

The singers rested, laughed and talked. Dot listened as usual in his narrow room.

"I came to the church directly from the train," said the Tenor, "and amused myself for a time with Dot. A wonderful voice that boy has."

"Dot?" said the precentor.

"Yes: the boy that blows the organ."

"Oh, yes, I had forgotten. I seldom see him," said the precentor. Now I think of it, the sexton told me some weeks ago that I must get a new organ boy another year: he says this one — Dot you call

him? — comes to the church through back alleys, and goes to the bellows room as soon as the church is open and hides there until service time, and that his clothes are not decent to be seen in a church on Sunday. Next Sunday begins the year — I must see to the matter."

"He does his work well?" asked the Alto with a touch of sympathy in her voice.

"Yes."

"Would it not be better to get him some new clothes, than to dismiss him?" she asked.

"No. Charity is charity, and business is business. Everything must be first class here. We cannot have ragamuffins creeping into the church to do church work. Of course, I should be glad to have the boy supplied with clothes. That is another thing. But we must have a different person in the bellows box. The sexton's son is bright, dresses well, and I have no doubt would be glad of the place. — Now we will sing the anthem, '*Good-will to men.*'"

The choir and chorus arose. The organist tinkled the bell, and bent down on the pedals and keys. There was a ripple of music, a succession of short sounds, and — silence.

The organist touched the knob at the side of the

key-board, and again the bell tinkled. His white hands ran over the keys, but there issued no sound.

He moved nervously from the bench, and opened the little door.

"Dot?"

No answer.

"The boy is sick or faint."

The Tenor stepped into the room and brought out a limp figure.

"Are you sick, Dot?"

"Yes, sir; what will become of mother?"

"He heard what you said about dismissing him," said the Alto to the precentor.

"Yes, but the sexton was right. Look at his shoes — why, his toes are sticking through them."

"And this bitter weather!" said the Alto, feelingly.

"Can you blow, Dot?"

"No, sir; it is all dark, sir. I can't see, sir. I can't but just stand up, sir. You won't dismiss me, sir, mother is lame and poor, sir — paralyzed, sir: that's what they call it — can't use but one hand, sir."

"This ends the rehearsal," said the precentor in an impatient way. "Dot, you needn't come to-mor-

row, nor till I send for you. Here's a dollar, Dot — charity — Christmas present."

One by one the singers went out, the precentor bidding the sexton have a care that Dot was sent home.

The Alto and the Tenor lingered. Dot was recovering.

"I shall not hear the music to-morrow. I do love it so."

"You poor child, you shall have your Christmas music to-morrow, and the best the city affords. Do you know where Music Hall is, Dot?"

"Yes, lady."

"There is to be an oratorio there to-morrow evening — *The Messiah*. It is the grandest ever composed, and no singing in America is equal to it. There is one chorus called the 'Hallelujah Chorus' — it is wonderful: the man who composed it thought he heard the angels singing and saw the Lord of Heaven, when he was at work upon it; and *he* is to be the first tenor singer, and *I* am to sing the altos — wouldn't you like to go, Dot?"

"Yes, lady. Is the man who composed it to be the tenor singer — the one who heard the angels singing, and thought he saw the Lord?"

"No, Dot: *he* is to be the tenor singer."

"*I*, Dot," said the Tenor.

"I have a ticket for the upper gallery, which I will give him," said the Alto. "A friend of mine bought it, but I gave her a seat on the floor, and kept this for — well, for Dot."

The Tenor talked low with the lady.

"Here is a Christmas present, Dot." He handed Dot a bill.

"And here is one for your mother," said the Alto, giving Dot a little roll of money.

Dot was better now. He looked bewildered at his new fortune.

"Thank you, lady. Thank you, sir. Are you able?" The Alto laughed.

"Yes, Dot. I am to receive a hundred dollars for singing to-morrow evening. I shall try to think of you, Dot, when I am rendering one of the passages — perhaps it will give me inspiration. I shall see you, Dot — under the statue of Apollo."

The sexton was turning off the lights in the chancel. He called Dot. The church grew dimmer and dimmer, and the great organ faded away in the darkness. In the vanishing lights the Alto and Tenor went out of the church, leaving Dot with the sexton.

How Dot Heard "The Messiah."

It was Sabbath evening — Christmas.

Lights glimmered thickly among the snowy trees on the Common; beautiful coaches were rolling through the crowded streets.

Dot entered Music Hall timidly through a long passage through which bright, happy faces were passing, silks rustling, aged people moving sedately and slowly, and into which the crowds on the street seemed surging like a tide. Faces were too eager with expectation to notice *him* or his feet. At last he passed a sharp angle in the long passage, and the great organ under a thousand gas-jets burst upon his view. An usher at one of the many lower doors looked at his ticket doubtfully:

"Second gallery — back."

Dot followed the trailing silks up the broad flights of stairs, reached the top, and asked another usher to show him his seat. The young man whom Dot addressed had that innate refinement of feeling that marks a true Boston gentleman. He gave Dot a smile, as much as to say, "I am glad *you* can enjoy all this happiness with the rest," and said:

"Follow me."

His manner was so kind that Dot thought he would like to speak to him again. He remembered

what the Alto had said about the statue of Apollo, and as the usher gave him back his check and pointed to the number on the check and the seat, Dot said:

"Will you please tell me, sir, which is the statue of Apollo?"

The usher glanced at the busts and statues along the wall. He spoke kindly:

"*That* is the Apollo Belvedere."

Dot thought that a pretty name; it did not convey to his mind any association of the Vatican palace, but he knew that some beautiful mystery was connected with it.

And now Dot gazes in amazement on the scene before him. In the blaze of light the great organ rises resplendently, sixty feet in height, its imposing façade hiding from view its six thousand pipes. People are hurrying into the hall, flitting to and fro; young ladies in black silks and velvets and satins; old men — where were so many men with white hair ever seen before? stately men with thin faces, bald — teachers, college professors. Tiers of seats in the form of half a pyramid rise at either end of the organ. These are filling with the chorus — sopranos and altos in black dresses and white shawls, tenors and basses in black coats, white neck-ties and kids.



DOT HAS NEVER HEARD SUCH MUSIC BEFORE.

In front, between the great chorus, rises a dark statue, and around this, musicians are gathering — players on violins, violas, violoncellos, contra basses, flutes, oboes, bassoons, trumpets, trombones, horns ; the pyramidal seats fill ; the hall overflows ; the doors are full, the galleries. The instruments tune. A dark-haired man steps upon the conductor's stand, he raises his baton ; there is a hush, then half a hundred instruments pour forth the symphony.

Dot listens. He has never heard such music before ; he did not know that anything like it was ever heard on earth. It grows sweeter and sweeter :

"*Comfort ye.*"

Did an angel speak ? The instruments are sweeter now :

"*Comfort ye my people.*"

Did that voice come from the air ?

Dot listens and wonders if this is earth :

"*Comfort ye, comfort ye my people saith your God, saith your God.*"

Dot sees a tall man standing alone — in front of the musicians — is it he that is singing ? Dot gazes

upon his face with wide eyes. It is *he* — and *he* is the Tenor who had befriended him the night before.

What music followed when the chorus arose and sang:

"*Every valley shall be exalted!*"

Dot hears the grand music sweep on, and he feels, as all feel, that the glorious Messiah is about to appear. He sees a lady in white satin and flashing jewels step forward: he hears a ripple of applause, and a voice full of strength and feeling sings:

"*O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!*"

Dot knows that voice. Will she indeed lift her eyes to him?

No, she does not. She sits down, the hall ringing with applause. She rises, bows, but she does not look towards the statue of Apollo, near which Dot is sitting.

Dot hears dreamy music now, more enchanting than any before it. The great audience do not stir, or move a fan, or raise a glass. It grows more ethe-

real; it seems now but a wavy motion in the air. He hears a lady near whisper:

"The Pastoral symphony."

The Alto has risen again. She stands out from the great chorus — what a beautiful figure! The dark-haired man lifts his baton: the lady turns her face toward the upper gallery. Her eyes wander for a moment; they rest on — Dot.

There was no applause now. Tears stood in the Alto's eyes — tears stood in the eyes of every one. There was a deep hush and tears, and in the silence the Alto stood looking steadily at — Dot.

There was a rustle in the hall — it grew. The silence was followed by a commotion that seemed to rock the hall. The applause gathered force like a tempest.

Then the beautiful lady looked towards Dot, and sang again the same wonderful air, and all the hall grew still, and people's eyes were wet again.

The Hallelujah Chorus with its grand fugues was sung, the people rising and standing with bowed heads during the majestic outpouring of praise.

It is ended now — faded and gone. The great

organ stands silent in the dark hall; the coaches have rolled away, the clocks are striking midnight.

"I have come to congratulate you before retiring," said our Tenor to the Alto, as he stepped into the parlor of the Revere House. "To-night has been the triumph of your life. Nothing so moved the audience as "*He shall feed his flock like a shepherd.*"

"Do you know to what I owed the feeling that so inspired me in that air?"

"No."

"It was poor little Dot in the gallery. You teach music, do you not?"

"Yes."

"You are about to open a school?"

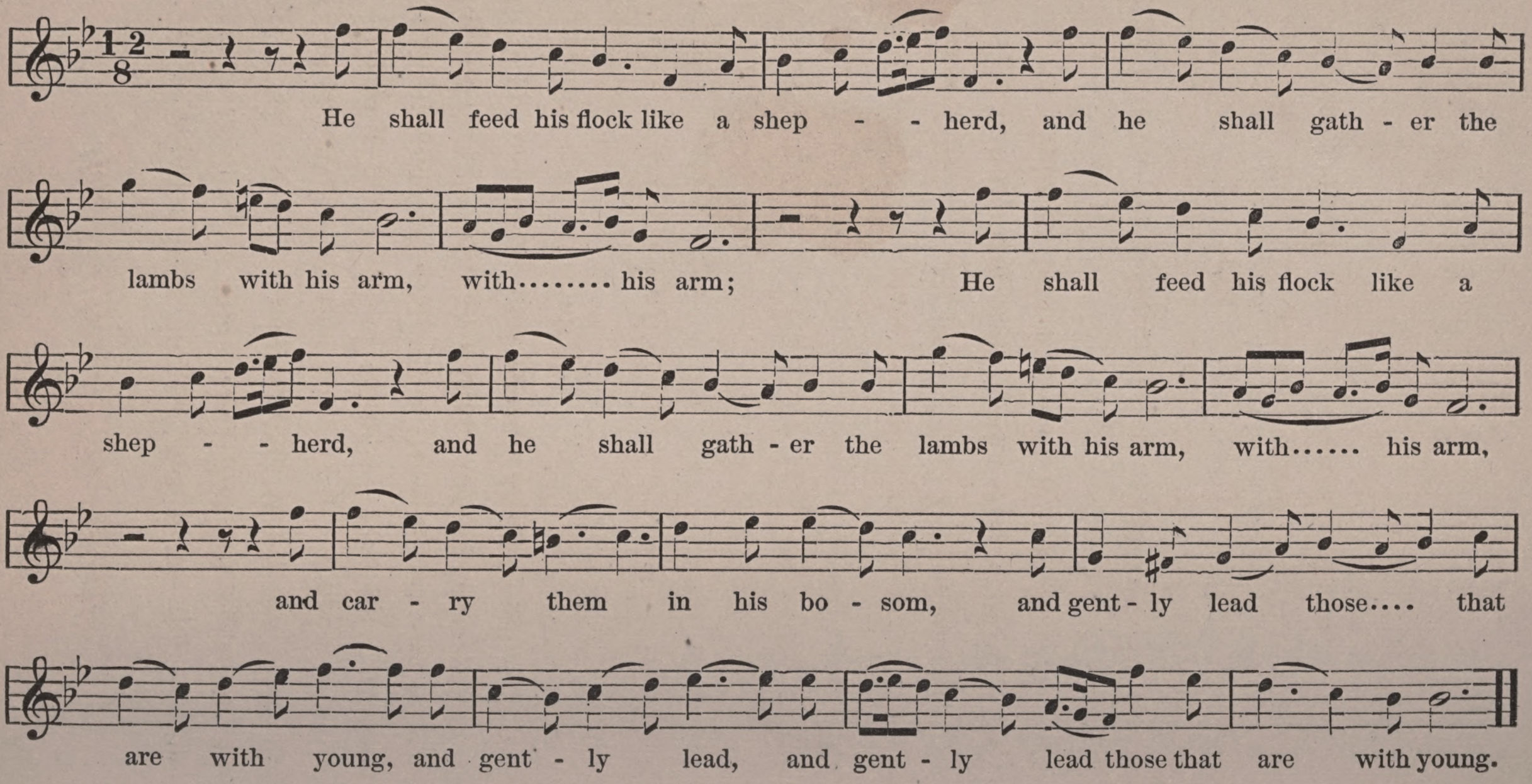
"Yes."

"Give Dot a place as office boy — errand boy — something. It will lift a weight from my heart."

"I had thought of it. He has a beautiful voice."

"I might get him a place in a choir."

Fifteen years have passed. The old Handel and Haydn Society have sung *The Messiah* fifty, perhaps sixty times. The snows of December are again on the hills. The grand oratorio is again rehearsing for the Sabbath evening before Christmas.


He shall feed his flock like a shep - - herd, and he shall gath - er the
lambs with his arm, with..... his arm; He shall feed his flock like a
shep - - herd, and he shall gath - er the lambs with his arm, with..... his arm,
and car - ry them in his bo - som, and gent - ly lead those.... that
are with young, and gent - ly lead, and gent - ly lead those that are with young.

A new tenor is to sing on the occasion — he was born in Boston, has studied in Milan, and has achieved great triumphs as an interpreter of sacred music in London and Berlin.

The old hall is filled again. The symphony has begun its dulcet enchantment; the Tenor, with a face luminous and spiritual, arises, and with his first notes thrills the audience and holds it as by a spell:

"*Comfort ye.*"

He thought of the time when he first heard those words. He thought of the hearts whose kindness had made him a singer. Where were they?" Their voices had vanished from the choirs of earth, but in spirit those sweet singers seemed hovering around him.

"*Comfort ye my people.*"

He looked, too, towards the Apollo on the wall. He recalled the limp bellows boy who had sat there sixteen years ago. How those words then comforted him! How he loved to sing them now!

"*Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned.*"

It was Dot.

HOW ALICE SPENT TWENTY-FIVE DOLLARS.

"TWENTY-FIVE dollars! what a lot of money! what a *heap* of it!" shouted Alice, in a little ecstacy, which she couldn't possibly restrain.

There was no need of her trying to restrain it. Twenty-five dollars is a sum of money which does not come every day even to rich boys and girls. And to Alice Brown it had never come at all before. Not even once. Indeed, she had never known the time when she had more than a dollar. And to have twenty-five dollars, all her own, all at one time, all to spend as she pleased, or not to spend if she pleased, was enough to quite turn her head.

It was too good to believe.

"Are you quite sure?" asked Mrs. Brown of Mr. Brown. "Quite sure she'll get it? That there's no mistake about it?"

"Quite sure," replied Mr. Brown, showing her a letter. "Lawyer Wiseman has just written. You know Alice was always a favorite with Miss Plimpkins."

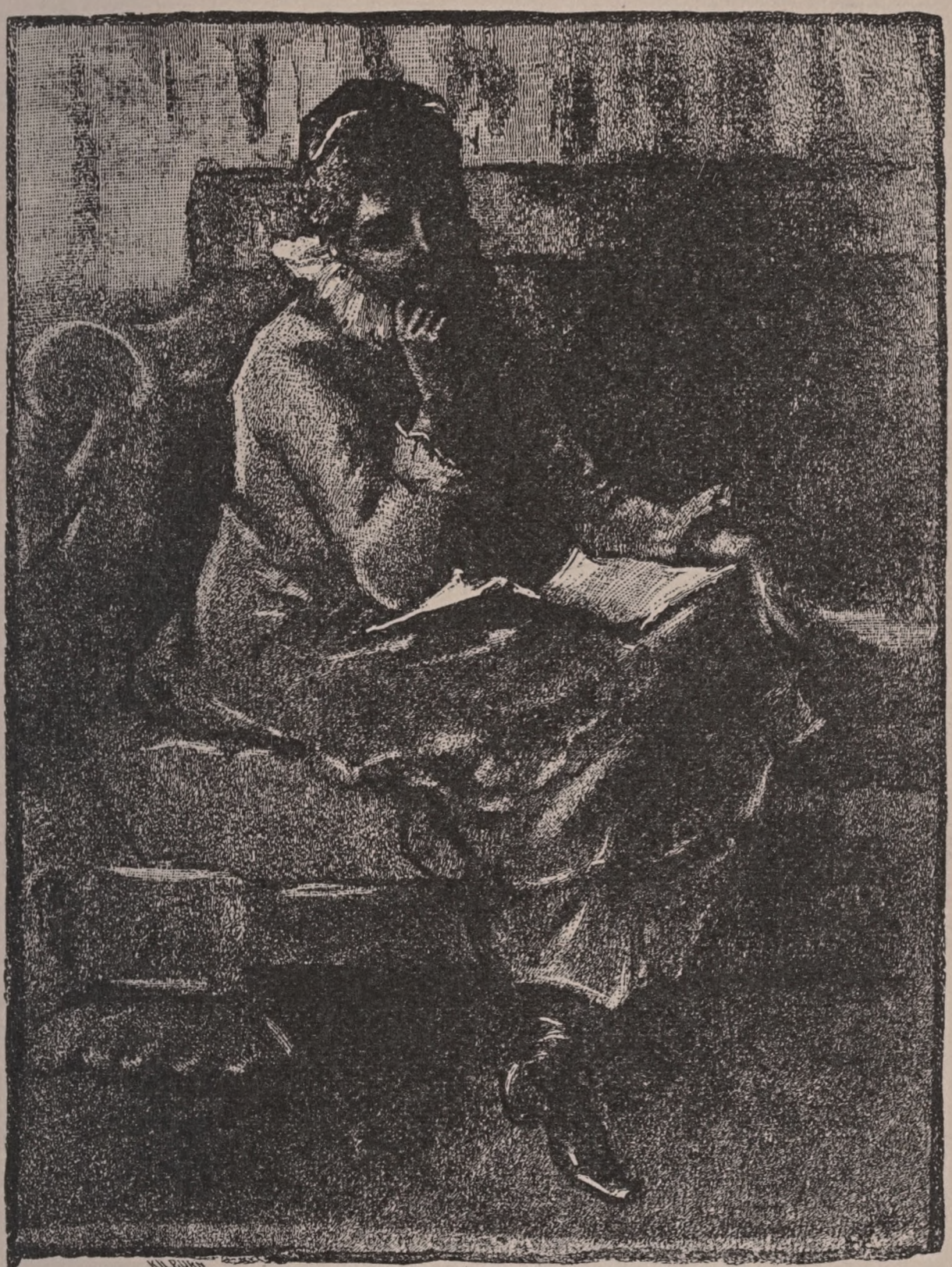
Miss Plimpkins was an old lady who had lived in the Brown family for a year or two when Alice was a small child, and she had been very fond of Alice indeed. Now she was dead, and she had left Alice a present in the shape of twenty-five dollars.

"What'll you do with it?" asked Mr. Brown of Alice. "What'll you do with so much money?"

Alice was sitting at the table with a piece of paper and pencil in her hand. She was trying to think how twenty-five dollars would look. She was wondering, when the money came, whether she would like it in two tens and a five, or five fives, or twenty-five ones. She was just deciding on the twenty-five ones, because they would look so much bigger than the others, when her father spoke.

"That's what I'm thinking of!" said Alice with sparkling eyes. "There are so many things!"

"Yes," said Mrs. Brown, "so *many* things. Only be sure and get the right ones."



SHE WAS TRYING TO THINK HOW TWENTY-FIVE DOLLARS WOULD LOOK.

"There's no danger!" cried Alice, flying out of the room up stairs to look over her collection of valuables.

And to tell the truth there wasn't much danger, for Alice had had so little money she knew how to value it, and wouldn't be likely to spend it foolishly.

But anyhow, foolishly or not, Alice began to spend the twenty-five dollars right away.

In her own room, Alice saw a little shelf of books with faded covers, and a few cheap prints without any frames; in one of the bureau drawers was a scanty lot of ribbons; and the one plain gold ring her father had given her looked very, very plain to her just then.

"I'll have some books the first thing!" said Alice to herself; and she immediately took down three or four of the oldest ones to make room for *Grimm's Tales*, *Leslie Goldthwaite* and the rest of Mrs. Whitney's books, and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland.* She had always wondered what that other Alice's adventures could be!

"There!" she exclaimed, with her head on one side to get the effect of the new bindings better. "You're mine after all!"

"Next I'll have a picture!" and Alice looked quite disapprovingly at the old prints that hung on the walls. "Let me see! that large colored picture they called 'Penelope.' I'll have that."

To tell the truth, the lovely face of little "Penelope" in her quaint cap had never once gone out of Alice's memory since she saw it hanging in the art store in all its magnificence of blue frame. How she had loved it and longed for it! But it had been as far beyond her reach as the moon. She had not even dared ask the price of it.

"This is the best place for it," said Alice, taking down one of the old prints, and deciding that the new comer should hang there. And she actually kissed the imaginary "Penelope" in an intense little rapture of admiration.

Then she went to her bureau and opened the ribbon-drawer. What a poor little collection of ribbons it was, to be sure!

"Now I'll have a cardinal-red sash!" cried Alice, and her heart fairly bounded and sang with the newness and splendor of the idea. She took out an old roll of cheap ribbon, very narrow and faded, and tied

it round her to see how many yards of the cardinal it would take. She turned round and round before the glass to make sure.

"Sp-lendid!" cried Alice, dancing up and down the room, quite the same as if she had the sash on. "Oh you dear Miss Plimpkins!"

Just then her mother opened the door and looked in. "What's the matter, my dear?" asked she, hearing the noise. "Come; Jenny Allingham is here. She's come to spend the afternoon with you."

So Alice took off the narrow old ribbon, and ran down stairs to see her friend just as if nothing had happened — just as if she hadn't been buying books and pictures and ribbons.

Late in the afternoon when the two girls had swung, and played "Authors," and beaten each other in croquet, they sat down in a snug corner of the piazza to talk.

"Jenny," began Alice, very mysteriously, "if you had twenty-five dollars, what would you do with it?" She hadn't said a word about it before; and she didn't tell now. "I'm only supposing, you know," said she.

"Twenty-five dollars!" exclaimed Jenny in astonishment, for she had never had half or quarter that.

"Why, I'd get heaps o' things."

"Yes, I know," urged Alice. "But what; just tell what?"

So Jenny began to think what.

"Why, I'd get a hammock," said Jenny, finally, who was rather slow to suggest when she was actually pinned down to it.

"Oh, yes, I never thought of that!" exclaimed Alice, and she instantly had a vision of a girl about her own size lounging in a hammock, and reading the "*Adventures in Wonderland.*"

"And a necklace," continued Jenny, "such as Mary Devine wears. Gold, with the loveliest blue locket on it."

Alice's eyes shone, but she put down the temptation.

"Or a beautiful cabinet like May Rogers'. Her aunt brought it to her from New York; and it's just the *loveliest* thing," sighed Jenny.

"Yes," said Alice, admiringly; "but tell about

something cheaper; something that don't cost so much."

"Why, there's plenty of 'em. Rings, and work-boxes, and thimbles, and tea-sets, and fans, — and everthing!" named Jenny, quite promiscuously, and pouncing upon each article triumphantly.

"Yes, thank you, that's enough," said Alice, a perfect whirl of magnificent ideas going through her head.

But Alice was a generous girl, and that night she thought half reproachfully: "I mustn't spend it all for myself, though. There's old aunt Patty. She doesn't have enough to live on, I know. I'll spend five dollars of my money for her."

So Alice's mind started off at once to buy presents for aunt Patty, — a calico dress, a pair of slippers, a pound of tea at the grocer's, and ever so many smaller things for the old woman's comfort. She even went so far as to carry the packages home, and quite overwhelmed the solitary old soul with the number and magnificence of her gifts.

"Lor' bless yer, chile! Don't gib me any mo'! Yer won't hab nuffin lef'!" exclaimed aunt Patty,

showing her white teeth; and Alice went off to sleep with the gratitude and gladness of the poor old colored woman warming her heart as not even the cardinal sash or Jenny's shining necklace had done.

A few days later Jenny Allingham came running in to see Alice.

"My pa's going to the Centennial!" cried she. "And he's going to take me! I wish you could go with us!"

Poor little Alice! she fairly trembled with the excitement of the idea. In an instant, down tumbled the new books and the lovely Penelope; the bright sash ribbon faded out, with all the other beautiful things; and even poor old aunt Patty was quite forgotten.

"O, if I only *could* go!" exclaimed Alice, dashing out of the room to tell her mother.

"But then—" she thought. "The money! 'Tisn't paid yet! And they wouldn't wait!"

So she had to tell Jenny she couldn't go; but the new idea set her imagination on fire, and for a week Alice did nothing but read about the great fair at

Philadelphia. She looked up all the old papers that gave accounts of it, and sitting in her own little room at home, wandered with the newspaper reporters through the vast buildings in Fairmount Park, and saw the thousands of wonderful, beautiful and useful things collected there.

But reading about the great exhibition so much set her thinking about the different countries represented there, and Alice began to travel. Away over the seas sailed her thoughts, to Europe, and Japan, and India. She rode through the beautiful streets of Paris, climbed the old tower of London, saw the glorious cathedrals, and sailed on Lake Geneva.

Then the oranges she ate! the spices she smelled and the sandalwoods! the queerly-dressed people she saw, and the oddly-built houses!

For a time Alice went abroad in this manner regularly every day, and every day she brought home a cargo of precious things. But wherever she went, and whatever she saw, she never for an hour forgot the twenty-five dollars.

"I wonder when it'll be paid!" said she, one morn-

ing about a month after her father had received the letter.

Just then her father came in from the post-office, and he had a letter in his hand.

"It's from Lawyer Wiseman," said he, looking at Alice.

"Oh goody, goody!" shouted Alice. "The money's come!"

"No, it hasn't," said Mr. Brown, soberly; "it hasn't come, and it isn't coming. Miss Plimpkin's friends didn't like the will, and they've broken it;" and he threw the letter down on the table.

This was a thunderbolt indeed.

"Oh! oh! oh!" groaned poor Alice, and the tears dropped down her cheeks in a perfect shower.

"Never mind, my dear, cheer up," said Mrs. Brown, who was sadly disappointed too. "Cheer up! you're as well off as you were before."

But Alice wouldn't cheer up or be comforted. It was too sudden, too unexpected, too dreadful.

But the next morning when Alice woke, the sun was shining, the birds were singing, and the day was

very beautiful. A beautiful day does something to make one happy.

"I am as well off as I was before," said Alice at the breakfast-table.

"Yes," replied her mother, smiling, "you are *better* off."

Alice looked up inquiringly.

"You've had so many pleasant thoughts, you know," explained Mrs. Brown.

Alice remembered the new books and the lovely "Penelope," and she smiled back again.

"And the sash!" added her mother, who had seen her with the old ribbon round her waist.

"Yes," said Alice, remembering how she had loved the color and the softness and the shine of the silk girdle.

"Then all the beautiful things Jenny Allingham told about!" thought she.

"And the presents for aunt Patty!" suggested her mother. "Poor thing! she'll never know how happy you made her."

Mr. Brown hadn't heard about this, but he had seen Alice reading about the exhibition in the papers

"You *almost* went to the Centennial, too, didn't you?" said he.

"And to Europe!" shouted Alice, who was now almost glad she had been disappointed.

"All this for twenty-five dollars!" cried Mrs. Brown with enthusiasm.

"And a twenty-five dollars that never came!" added Mr. Brown triumphantly.

And poor Alice wildly clapped her hands, declaring she should never, never again spend twenty-five dollars so delightfully.

HOW THE TWINS CAMPED OUT.

THE twins sat on a bench in the back porch, looking solemnly at each other.

"Planning mischief," Nora said, when she saw them from the kitchen window.

They looked very much alike. Both had round healthy faces, with light curling hair, and they wore blue knickerbockers much soiled at the knee. They behaved very much alike also. Otis said they were twins all but one thing: they were not brothers.

Alexander Vietts Griswald Greene was seven years old.

Otis White was eight.

The boy with the long name invented mischief, and the other was a committee of ways and means.

As an executive officer, he was a complete success.

It was understood that they were needed only half a day at either house; so it made little difference which side of the garden they spent the morning and took dinner — they were expected by the other much-enduring family in the afternoon.

"I don't feel very tired," said Otis, "but your papa told me we had worked enough, for one summer, and he wished we would rest at least a week. But I don't know how to rest."

"Oh, I do," said Ally; "uncle Ned did it last summer at Ranger's Lakes. That is so far away they have not begun to have Sundays yet, papa said. Uncle Ned was tired out, and he went up there and camped out, slept on hay, and ate fish. He said it was as good as play to get their own supper. I don't think they had breakfast or dinner: he only said supper, and I know they ate a great deal, six fish sometimes. We could not go there, but we might sleep on the hay in our barn, if you can get the fish."

"I suppose Nora would give me anything if we would go," said Otis. "She said when I helped her

beat eggs and forgot to take the shell off one, that she wished we were in Halifax."

"Did she? Where is Halifax?" inquired Ally.

"I don't know: a good ways, I guess, for Nora said she would have time to clear up for once before we could get back."

"Well, ask her for the things now."

Two pairs of feet clattered into the Whites' kitchen, and two voices cried at the same time, "Nora, will you give us provisions enough to last a week? We want to camp out and rest."

But Nora was talking with Mary in the next house, and did not hear them.

"I can't ask mamma, because she has gone to see aunt Jennie," said Otis; "but I think she would let us go, and give us things."

"I know she or Nora would let us have the things if she was here," said Ally.

"We might take them, then," said Otis, "and tell about it when we come back."

So Otis took up the market basket and went into the pantry. "I don't see any fish," he called, "but I like chicken better."

The nice slices of chicken which Nora had ready for tea, were laid in the basket with biscuit, cake and cookies. A small pail of milk Otis took in his hand.

No one saw the little bandits as they left the kitchen and went over into Mr. Greene's barn.

They climbed into the loft, and put the basket in a safe place, while they scooped out a hollow in the hay for a bed. This bed looked narrow, and they lay down to try it. The hay was soft and fragrant. It rustled drowsily under their heads.

They soon remembered that they were camping out when they awoke in the hay just before dark, feeling as if they were very far from home.

It was delightful. Why had they never thought of this before? And the supper was delicious.

In the edge of the evening, when Patrick came from the station with the Greene and White fathers, the two houses were in a state of commotion not to be described.

Now the twins were as well known as the post-man. They had been lost and returned so many times that their anxious mothers had ceased to feel

anxious during an absence. But this time they had not come back, nor had they been returned, nor could they be found.

It did not seem probable they would walk three miles to aunt Jennie's, but, as Patrick said, "you would be likely to find them where they were not likely to be."

He drove away in search of the two colors while the two families renewed their efforts in vain. The clocks were striking nine when Patrick returned alone.

Taking care of the tired horse, and lamenting over the poor little chaps, Patrick started so suddenly, when a voice from the loft above called his name, that he dropped his measure of oats on the floor.

"Patrick," said the small voice again, "we forgot the blankets."

"What are you doing up there, Ally?"

"Otis and I are camping out, and we need blankets to-night," Ally replied.

Patrick left the barn in such haste that he forgot to close the door. The heads of the families held a

consultation. At the close, Patrick returned with blankets, and made the pair comfortable.

It was a disturbed night for all. Patrick on the hay below was sure their tongues never stopped at all. The long sleep in the afternoon and the unusual supper made them restless, and it was almost morning when they fell into a sound slumber.

All was still in the barn when they awoke. Even the horse was gone.

Ally took up a pail of fresh milk which stood near them.

"They don't expect us home, but I should think mamma would miss us," he said.

Sitting in their hay bed, they drank the milk and ate the remains of last night's feast. It was quite unlike the cheery home breakfasts. They did not feel sure it was as pleasant.

"Do you suppose, Ally, that your uncle Ned's clothes made him tired nights?" asked Otis. "Mine feel as though they belonged to some other boy. I am more tired than when I began to rest. My papa says that everybody needs occupation, and I think we had better find some."

Down in the barn the door of a closet stood open where Patrick kept his tools. There was a pail of paint on the shelf. "It is to paint the doors, Ally," said Otis. "I asked Patrick yesterday when I was over here to let me paint Billy's portrait on his stable door, and he said I must practice on a board first. But I think I shall do it on the closet door."

The artist had not commenced his work when Patrick came in. "Good-morning," said he, putting up the paint and locking the closet door. "Have you any engagement this morning? If not, Mrs. White sends her compliments, and she has heard some strange young gentlemen are camping out near her place, and would they be kind enough to call at her house?"

"Mrs. White!" exclaimed Otis.

"Yes, she is your mother, I believe."

"No," said Otis, thinking of Mrs. White, the invalid lady who kept a small store down the street; but he added, after a moment's thought, "My mother *is* Mrs. White, I suppose."

"She says aunt Jennie and little Eddie are there, and would like to see you," continued Patrick.

Mrs. White received them very politely, offered seats, and inquired if the camp was comfortable. Did they expect friends to join them? or would they remain there alone? The strange young gentlemen were too much surprised to speak.

They looked so funny, sitting up straight in chairs, with unwashed faces and hay sticking in their hair, that aunt Jennie had to look out of the window, and little Eddie was afraid.

Nora came to the door with a message for Mrs. White; and when that lady politely asked them to excuse her, the little campers could bear it no longer.

Ally put on his hat.

"We will go," said he, "and see if *my* mother knows us."

But Mrs. Greene had gone out for the day, and there was no dinner.

The boys went back to camp.

"Your father's barn is a lonesome old place," said Otis; "looks like an orphan asylum."

"What is that?" inquired Ally.

"A place where they shut up children who have no mothers."

But, ascending to the "camp," they found that there was a dinner of fried fish and bread on a board, which they relished.

The afternoon was very long, for they had not the courage to call on Mrs. White again.

It was almost night when Mrs. Greene came into the camping regions, smiling.

Ally bounded down to her, exclaiming, "Mamma can we go home? I am tired of this old camp."

"I hardly know how to answer you, my dear," replied Mrs. Greene. "You went away without asking papa. He may expect you to ask him if you can return. But you can go with me now and see him if you like."

The little culprits were so unconscious of doing wrong at first, and so penitent when they knew what trouble they had caused, that Mr. Greene at once became willing that they should break camp and come home. Before Mrs. Greene had them washed and brushed, they had recovered their spirits, and were ready to forgive the White family and aunt Jennie.

Nora received them with open arms. She made

quite a little feast in honor of their return, and they both supped at the Whites'. She hugged them separately and in a bunch.

They are still trying to help, and tell the story of their one night in camp, as old soldiers tell the history of battles from which they barely escaped with life.

HOW DOT PLAYED SHE WAS TWO.

DOT was eight years old. She had very indulgent parents and a beautiful home, but she was the only child in it, and it was the great grief of her little life that she had no sister. She had a play-room full of toys, and a book-case full of wonderful pictures and story-books. Her mamma often read and told stories to her, and often invited other children to play with her, but still Dot was lonely, and would have traded everything she had for the tiniest bit of a sister.

"Mamma," she said, one day, "I wish you'd play I was two."

"Play what, Dottie?"

"Play I was two, mamma. You've only got one little girl, and we want another so dreadfully! So

let's play I was *two* little girls — one must be Dot, and the other Dottie, and when you call Dot, I'll come, and if you call 'Dottie,' I'll come all the same, only then, you know, I'll be the *other* one. Will you, mamma?"

"Yes," said mamma, smiling.

"And you must ask me, 'Where is your sister?' and I'll say, 'Oh, she's up-stairs, or she's dressing her dolls,' or something. Will you, mamma?"

"Yes."

"I shall have this doll for my sister, mamma," and Dot held up her largest doll. "She shall be my twin sister. Twins always look alike, you know — doesn't she look like me? See, her curls are yellow, and so are mine; and her eyes are blue and her cheeks are red, just like mine."

"But I don't quite understand," said mamma. "Am I to have *three* twins, then?"

"Why, no, ma'am: I'm to be *your* two, but I've got to have some one to be *the other one* to *me*, you know."

"It is rather a confusing arrangement, I think," said mamma, laughing, "but I'm sure it will be very nice indeed."

"And oh! mamma — twins always dress alike. Couldn't you make her a little dress just like my new one? Please now, you *dear* mamma!"

Mamma patted the pretty face, and thought she might if there was enough blue bunting left, which was very likely. Cook then came for orders, and Dot, hearing the door-bell ring, settled waxen "Dot-tie" on a lounge and strayed into the parlor to see who had been shown in.

A lady whom she had never seen before sat there. Dot spent so much time with her mother that she was accustomed to seeing visitors, so she was soon chatting sociably.

"I have not seen your mother for a long time," the lady said: "has she any little girls besides you, or any little boys?"

"Well, we haven't any little boys, but I have a twin sister — that is, you know," said Dot, confidentially, "I *play* she's my — " but here her mother came in, and with the exclamations, "Why, Janet, *you!*" and "My dear Ruth!" the two ladies met eagerly.

The visitor was an old schoolmate of Mrs. Prince,

Dot's mother, who was very glad to learn that she, with her family, had moved into one of the suburbs of the city, and was now living but a few miles from them. The friends had not heard from each other for several years, and Dot sat quietly by for a short time, listening to their talk of old times. But Mrs. Bright made but a short call, and soon left, with promises of pleasant visits to come.

Dot went for Dottie, and carried her up to the sewing-room to consult with the seamstress as to whether there was enough stuff left, *surely*, to make her a dress exactly like her own.

The "play I was two" plan worked very well. To be sure, Dot's mother sometimes forgot which of her was Dot and which Dottie; but that really did not matter much. Dot found her twin sister a great comfort, for, if she was not quite as lively as could have been wished, she fully made up for it in other ways. She was the most accommodating little thing in the world. If Dot did not feel like dressing her in the morning, she would lie in her little bed all day, contentedly staring at a chubby cherub on the ceiling paper. Or, if she were set to learn a lesson, she

would sit for hours with her eyes fixed on her book. She never wanted more than her share of nuts or candy. She never quarrelled with her sister, or meddled with her toys, and always did exactly what she was told. All this, you know, is more than can be said of some twin sisters.

Dot came one morning into the breakfast-room, got her kiss, and explained that Dottie had a slight attack of "the nervous," and would take her breakfast in bed to-day.

"Dear me!" exclaimed mamma to papa, "How strange it is that one or other of these children is so often sick! We scarcely ever see both of them at the table at once. You must be sure and see that the poor little thing has a good breakfast, Dot." Something of this kind was expected to be said every morning, and gave a delightful tinge of "sure enough" to the make-believe.

"Listen, dear," went on mamma, as she opened a letter. "This is from Mrs. Bright, the lady who came here last week." She read:

"My children are to have a little lawn party on Friday afternoon, and I want you to come out and bring the little daughter

I saw at your house, and the twin sister she told me of, whom I did *not* see. Come by the early afternoon train. Mr. Bright will call for Mr. Prince to come by a late train to dinner. Don't disappoint us. I will meet you at the station *without fail.*

"JANET BRIGHT."

Dot smiled. "I told her how I played I had a twin sister, mamma, and I think she's very nice to invite her, too. I suppose all the little girls will have their dolls. Can we go, mamma?"

"I think so, but stay — our Aid Society meets that afternoon, and I am one of the managers, and must be there. I'm sorry, little daughter, but I'm afraid you'll have to go late, with papa and me."

Dot's face fell. Then her papa spoke:

"It is only a few miles out there; I can put her under the conductor's care, and he'll place her in Mrs. Bright's hands."

"Oh, she's too little to go so," said her mother. "I don't think I *could* let her. Something might happen to her."

"What *could* happen?" It really was not easy to say what; and Dot coaxed, and papa seconded her, till mamma gave an unwilling consent. So, in due time, with many cautions to herself and the conduc-

tor, Dot was placed in a seat in the car, closely hugging the darling Dottie, in all the glory of her new dress — peacock blue with cardinal pipings, and a hat precisely like Dot's own.

"She looks *so* becoming in it!" Dot assured her mother, with immense satisfaction.

Many a smile awakened at sight of the dainty little lassie, carrying the small ditto of herself. But Dot did not find it as nice as she had expected. She had never before seen only strange faces around her, and she soon began to wonder how she ever could have left her mother. She sat Dottie in a corner of the seat, and waited anxiously, as several stations were passed in the closely-settled city suburbs, glad when the conductor took her hand and led her out upon the platform of a way-station.

"I was to leave this child with a Mrs. Bright," he said, speaking in haste to a man who seemed to be in charge. "I can't wait a moment."

"Mrs. Bright is not here, but I suppose she will be soon, if she was to meet some one," was the answer. "She lives very near, and if she doesn't come I'll send the little girl to her by safe hands."

The conductor knew the man was to be trusted, so he stepped on board his train, and it soon sped out of sight. And not till the last car disappeared around a curve did poor Dot remember, with grief and dismay, that in her haste she had forgotten Dottie, her precious twin sister — blue dress, new hat and all.

It would have been bad enough to be left alone this way, without having to bear such a misfortune, too. The man spoke pleasantly to her and gave her a chair, and she sat there with a big lump gathering in her throat, and tears clamoring to get out of her blue eyes. Five, ten, fifteen, yes, twenty minutes she waited, and then a horse was driven up fast, and Mrs. Bright in a great flutter, came half tumbling out of a pretty rockaway.

"You poor little darling — no one to meet you, and you all alone! To think of that wretched buckle breaking in the harness just as we were starting! So sorry to get your mother's note that she couldn't come till late. But where's your sister?"

As the tightly pressed lips opened to answer, the tears would not keep back any longer.



DOT PLAYS SHE IS TWO.

"I — she's on the car," sobbed poor Dot. "She's gone — "

"What!" exclaimed Mrs. Bright, raising her hands in horror; "do you mean that she's gone on in the train?"

Dot's sobs redoubled at sight of her agitation, and Mrs. Bright saw that it would not do to excite the child further. She led her out and put her in the carriage, where she was much comforted at sight of a little girl rather older than herself. The lady then returned to the station-master.

"Mr. Barton, what shall I do? what *shall* I do? That child's sister has gone on in the train. Do telegraph somewhere — quick!"

"Very strange! The conductor put her off here. That train," he looked up a time-table, "is beyond Glendale by this time. Hamilton will be the best place for her to get off and take a down train. What shall I say?"

"Oh dear, let me see — a little girl, about eight, I believe — how was your sister dressed, Dottie?" she cried, running out to the carriage.

"Just like me, ma'am."

"Of course. Well, don't cry any more, pet, we'll have her back here soon. John, drive the children home, and come back for me."

"— Dressed in blue — they're twins. Oh dear, such a mite of a thing to be off by herself! When is the next train up? — I believe I'll go after her myself."

"Don't you fret now, ma'am. That wouldn't do any good, for like as not you'd miss her coming back. They'll take good care of her, and return her all right, you'll see."

Mrs. Bright walked up and down the platform, thinking the answer never would come. At last:

"Here 'tis!" But as Mr. Barton pencilled it off his face grew blank. It ran:

"*No such child on train. She got off at Groveland.*"

Mrs. Bright looked at him in terror.

"What does it mean?" she gasped. "There were two."

"I'm blamed if I know, ma'am," he said; "I never knew such a thing to happen before."

"What can we do next?" she said, a tremble in her voice.

"She might have got off at one of the stations above here. I might telegraph and inquire."

"Yes, yes — telegraph anywhere."

Some train despatches were passing, and the answers were some time delayed. But at last it was ascertained that nothing had been seen of any such child.

"She might have *fallen* off," exclaimed Mrs. Bright, now nearly beside herself. "Send men on foot all along the road. I must go into the city at once and see Mr. Bright and the child's parents — they were to come out at half past five — but we must advertise in all the papers, and get out the police."

"See here, ma'am," said Mr. Barton, in real pity for her distress, "I'd advise you to stay out here and let them come. We may hear something before that time, and then they needn't be alarmed. I'll send out good men, and they'll telegraph the moment they find her. You'd better go home, ma'am, and I'll let you know the first word I hear."

Mrs. Bright knew this would be best. With a cold chill at her heart at thought of what *might be*, she rode home, finding a group of happy children at play on the lawn.

Dot had soon made friends with the little Brights and others, and had almost forgotten her troubles. She looked at Mrs. Bright as she drew near, but did not leave her place in the merry circle which sang:

"Here we go round the mulberry bush."

"I haven't brought her yet, Dottie," she said, "but she'll come soon," and as Dot laughed and moved on, the lady could not help thinking, "I wonder how she can take it so coolly! Childlike, I suppose, but I do think our children would have felt it more if one of their number had been lost."

"I should not have cried a bit about it," said Dot to Alice Bright, a little later, as they walked arm-in-arm through the shrubbery, "if she hadn't had on her nice new dress, and such a beautiful hat. It was the first time she ever wore them, and—" Dot sighed mournfully—"*I* don't believe she'll ever come back."

Alice looked at her in surprise, thinking this a very queer thing for her to say. She privately told it to the nurse-maid, who told the cook and house-maid, and they came out to look at Dot, and all thought she must be a very queer child indeed, but certainly was a very nice-looking one.

The carriage was sent for the expected guests, and nothing had been heard of the lost child. Mrs. Prince came in it, the gentlemen preferring to walk. Mrs. Bright met her at the door with a brave attempt to look as if nothing was the matter; she must not know till all hope of soon finding the little one was gone. The children had been sent to play in another part of the grounds, and she was hurried up-stairs. Before long Mr. Prince and Mr. Bright were heard chatting in the parlor below, and Mrs. Bright's kindly heart grew heavier with every step she took, as she went down to put such a dreadful end to their friendly talk. She came before them with such a quivering face that her husband seized her hands in alarm.

"O Mr. Prince," she said, "your little girl is lost — but — she will be found soon, I know — I'm *sure* of it, sir. She got left on the train — and we have telegraphed and telegraphed, but she isn't found yet."

He started to his feet and listened with a white face, his mind going back to the moment when he had led his little daughter into the car that afternoon, rather against her mother's wish.

"Stay, sir," went on Mrs. Bright; and Mr. Bright

laid his hand on his shoulder as he stepped towards the door. "There are men out searching — Mrs. Prince don't know."

There was a cheery sound of children's voices and steps in the hall. The door opened suddenly, and with a "Papa dear, have you come?" Dot sprang into her father's arms. "O, papa, don't squeeze me so hard, you hurt me," she cried as he turned with what she thought a very strange look to Mrs. Bright.

"Madam, I must have misunderstood you," he said; and his voice was strange, too. But at this moment Dot heard her mother calling her, and she slipped from his arms and ran up-stairs.

"She must be told tenderly, or it will kill her," said Mrs. Bright. She did not wait to hear anything more from Mr. Prince, but flew after Dot. But the bonny thing was already perched in her mother's lap.

"And mamma, poor Dottie's lost. I left her on the car, and she's gone travelling away off, and I don't believe she'll ever come back!"

Poor Mrs. Bright dropped into a chair, waiting helplessly for her friend to scream, faint, or go into hysterics. Mrs. Prince went on stroking the light curls.

"Oh, well, never mind her, dear. I've got *you two* yet, you know, and I'll get you another twin sister."

Had she gone insane in one moment? Mrs. Bright ran and threw her arms around her.

"O Emeline, do you hear? Don't you understand what the child is telling you?"

"Why, yes, Janet: she has lost the doll she called her twin sister, but it's no matter, of course."

"*A doll!* All this about a doll!"

Mrs. Bright went to her room and laughed and cried, and had camphor and aromatic vinegar for half an hour. Then Dot crept up to her and said:

"Oh dear, Mrs. Bright, I'm *so* sorry. I'll never play there was two of us any more, *never!*" Mrs. Bright shook her and hugged her, and said, as she got up and brushed her hair for dinner:

"You dear little, funny little nuisance! Why didn't you tell me the other one of you was made of wax?"

What became of her?

She sat in the corner of the seat, not seeming to mind being left there at all. Pretty soon a mother with two or three little children took the seat, and

what a marvel she was to them! They hugged her and kissed her and quarrelled over her while they ate sticky gingerbread, till at last, when they left, she did not look quite as fresh as before. The mother had a very hard time coaxing them to leave her when they got off. Then a gentleman came, who put her into the rack overhead, and she rode there all the afternoon, with one arm dangling down, and her pretty French boots sticking out. All the little ones looked up at her and laughed, and wondered if the gentleman was taking her home to his little girl.

When night came, and the train reached the end of the route, she was left alone in the car, and the conductor took her to a place where they keep things lost or forgotten, to wait for some one to claim them. No one came for Dottie, and after a few days he took her to his lodging-house. He had no little ones of his own, but in a gloomy room there lived a crippled child, who never took a step out of it. She smiled and laughed and cooed and sang over this most beautiful thing which had ever come to her all through the years of her monotonous child-life.

If loving little Dot could have known of the brightness her twin sister carried into the shadowed home, she surely would have wanted to send every doll she owned travelling away on the cars all alone.

HOW CHRISTMAS CARDS ARE MADE.

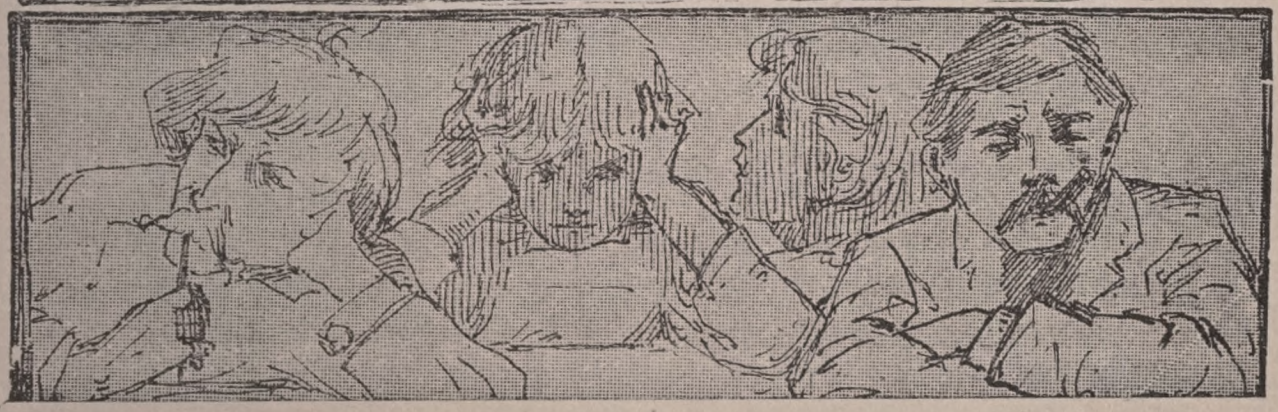
WHAT should we older folks have said if we could have had, when we were children, a Christmas card sent to us even like the least beautiful of those in the shop windows during the Christmas season.

In our time they probably had not so much as been thought of in this country. And it was not so *very*, *very* long ago either! Then a stocking-full of candy, a doll, a picture-book, a little wooden, or earthen, or sugar animal, a top, or any common toys — the list to select from was not long.

Now — everything! And, besides all the rest, these lovely Christmas cards — works from artist hands. Of course Christmas cards are for all ages and everybody. But the young people and the very little folks have certainly been most lavishly remembered. There are even whole series of baby cards, where babies are


PACKING ROOM


WHO MAKE
X-MAS CARDS



seen doing all those pretty things which are thought so "cunning!" And for the five or six year-old lads and lassies there are the sweetest pictures ever made; and so on, all the way from the time of dolls, up.

Cards, cards: sent from house to house, loading down the mail-bags, distributed in hospitals, going over the seas, down into mines, and off to lonely cattle ranches and log-cabin homes; away back to the farthest western town, which in that period I spoke of had not even begun to be; and to distant colonies where then only savages were — wherever the mail-bag goes, there go they. And that is one of the pleasant things about them, next to their prettiness and cheapness. They can be so conveniently sent, and with no cost but a postage-stamp. No breakages either, as there might be to a porcelain vase, a carved bracket, a wax doll, or an elaborate toy. The cards are really the most available of all the tokens of good-will, at a time when everybody wants to send something to everybody else. And this is one of several reasons why they are so popular.

To know just how popular they are with all classes, you ought to wait at the counter or near the windows

of some store in one of the large cities just before Christmas. As that day approaches, these places fairly bloom out with cards. You would know the tempting show was spread, by the crowd hanging about from morning till night. Every one is a tip-toe to peep over his neighbors' shoulders, until you would think that the seeing and buying of Christmas cards were the great events of the season. And to some people they are. Now and then some forlorn-looking old woman or child-beggar comes with a few pennies to pay for one; and the transaction has all the importance to the purchaser that a transfer of railroad or bank stock has to some millionaire broker.

It was as good as reading a dozen story-books to stand one evening near the counter of a store where a brisk business in this line was going on, and watch those who were buying cards; to see their faces and hear what they said.

How those school-girls did "gush"! It was just "gush" — no other word expresses all that delicious babble and chatter, those extravagant expressions, those little ripples of talk. Everything was "too sweet," or "too lovely," or "too cunning for any-

thing." It was a "darling," or a "dear." And they were so good-natured!

"Oh, isn't this just the most charming thing? oh, isn't this splendid? oh, it is too perfect! It is — it is *exquisite!*" "*I* like this best!" "*This* is my choice! No. I can't tell! Oh, if they weren't all so pretty! How *am* I going to choose?" "Which do *you* like best? Oh, say, which *do* you?"

They were grammar-school girls who rattled away so — bright young girls with the rosy faces and sparkling eyes that we older people like to look at; and they had lovely Russia-leather porte-monnaies and glittering purses, and "lots of money to spend on Christmas cards."

As they lingered, and chattered, and admired, and selected, away up even to the dollar cards, they were jostled by an old rag-picker, wrinkled, skinny, brown as a gypsy, careworn and poverty-stricken; and then by a ragged bootblack and his comrade.

She held a dingy piece of scrip on which a faded figure five was barely visible; and she caught eagerly at a card adorned with a guady cherub, with wide-

open mouth, as if it was the only one worth looking at. Exchanging the crumpled rag of money for it, she hurried off, her treasure extended at arms' length before her, as one would hold out a contribution-box.

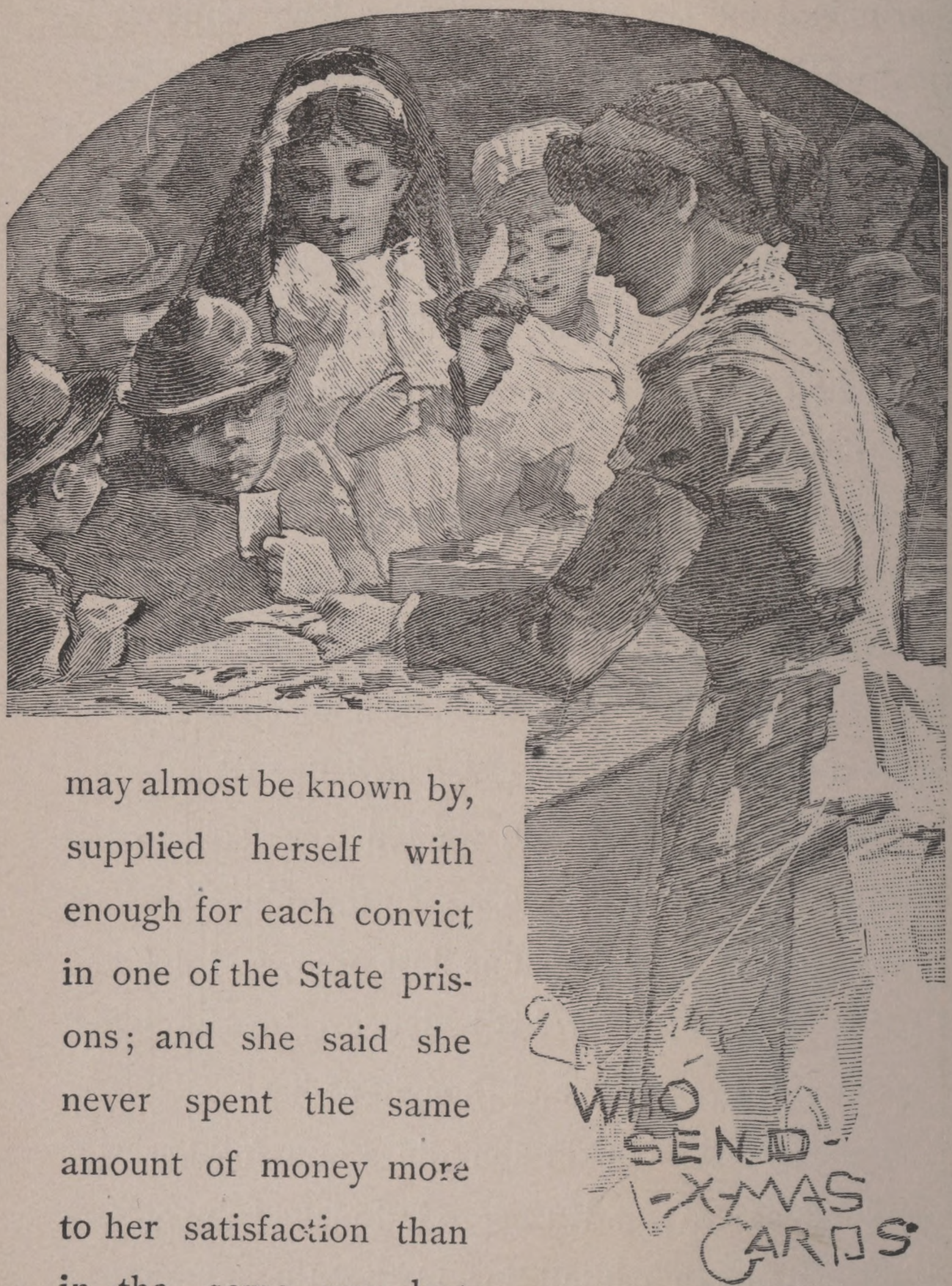
The boy clutched a silver dime, while he stood in what must have been an agony of indecision before two cards; and his companion sympathized with him. Our small polisher of boots was without a jacket; his trousers were patched, and so was his shirt; his auburn hair showed through a hole in his hat, and his bare toes could be seen in the yawning gaps in his boots. But he had a taste for the beautiful, and the two cards represented everything to be desired. He wanted both, but could have only one.

It was to be for Jessie; but whether Jessie was his small sweetheart, or sister, or neighbor, he did not tell. She was sick; and she was English, and her father had been a gardener, and he was dead; and he had been fond of violets, and she had always loved English violets best of all flowers. And this was a card of English violets, so freshly gathered, it would seem that you could almost smell their delectable

perfume. But the other card was a Kate Greenaway — a little damsel in a cap and flowered gown, with a green umbrella over her head. She had on red-heeled shoes, and she was walking in a garden; and she looked "like Jessie's sister that died that Jessie had not any photograph of." So, though the violets touched him nearly — poor, unkempt, rough-looking boy with the freckled face and red, chapped hands — his soul went forth to the little maid in the garden; and he turned his eager gaze first to one and then the other, till at last destiny interposed in the form of a friendly hand which slipped a dime into his other palm, while a voice whispered in his ear, "Buy them both."

Then came a child who wanted one "cheap but lovely," for her father who was in the mines in Colorado; she had sent him one last year, and he had kept it stuck up over his bed ever since, and had looked at it every day and thought of her.

A sailor's wife bought a cradle scene for her husband off at sea; and a negro lad picked out a frog fiddling under a cat-tail, for his "old mammy at the Souf." A woman with one of those faces radiating benevolence, which the habitual doer of kind deeds



may almost be known by, supplied herself with enough for each convict in one of the State prisons; and she said she never spent the same amount of money more to her satisfaction than in the same way last year. She had picked out home pictures: children playing, a fireside group, a mother with her

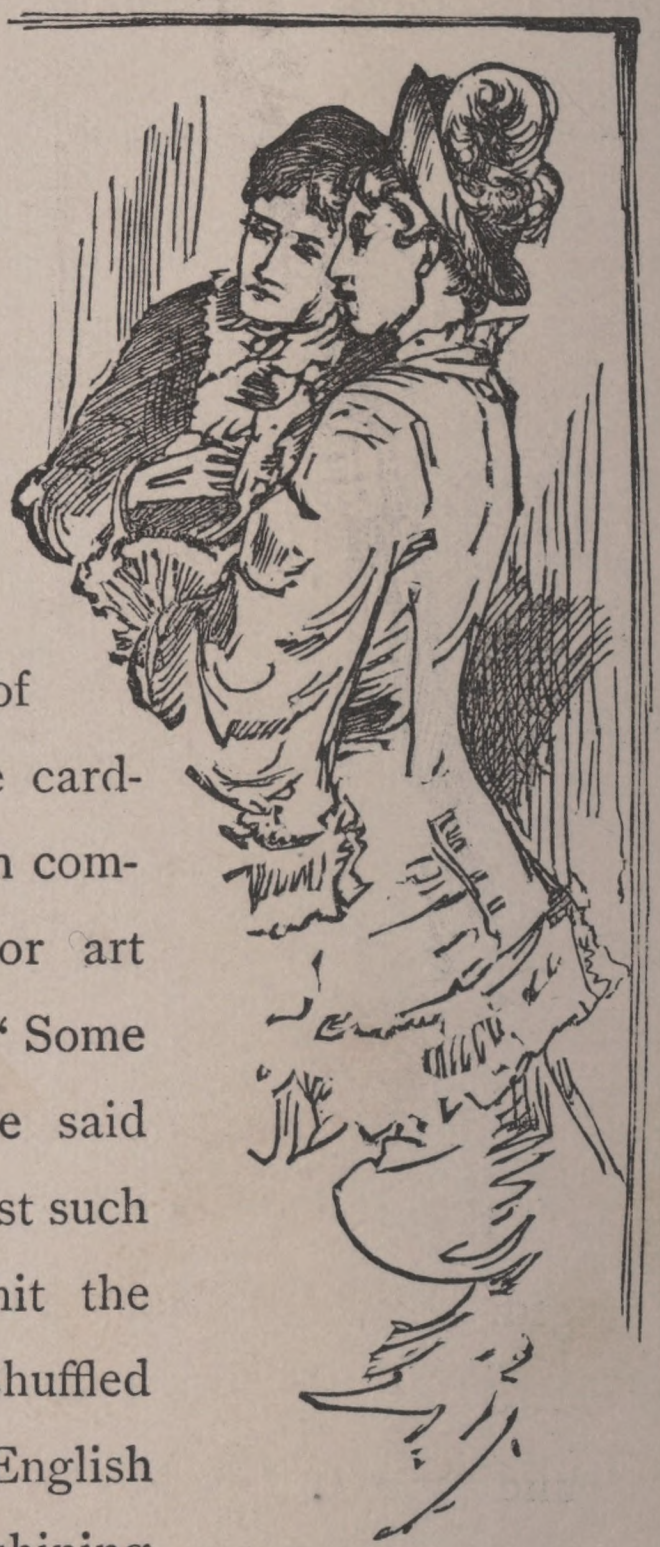
babe, and such things. And not a man but had done just what the miner did — put the card on the wall where he could see it the first thing in the morning.



It was cheering to observe how everybody, old or young, seemed under the power of that loving remembrance of *somebody;* and the very influence of such a spirit made the homeliest face beautiful. It is wonderful what a beautifier is that feeling of "peace on earth, good-will to men," which takes such possession of people at Christmas time. If it would only stay by!

Yet there were exceptions. Two stylish girls appeared, holding back their skirts, looking supercilious, disdainful, turning up their noses at those around them; and they inquired for "the latest

thing; something toney, you know." They did not want any of "*those* things, they are too common." "And why," asked one, "do you let such pretty things go so cheap that everybody can have them? It just spoils them."



TWO STYLISH GIRLS.

Whereupon the salesman quietly remarked that it was one of the leading ideas of the card-publishers to make them common, so that a taste for art should be educated. "Some of the best artists," he said "design and work on just such cards as these that hit the popular fancy;" and he shuffled over cherub faces, English landscapes framed in shining green holly, children singing Christmas carols, baskets of fruit and flowers,

birds, butterflies — everything that was attractive.

"Every year," he added, "people expect something prettier. Last year went beyond any other, and this year they are prettier than ever. By and by I am afraid the artists will exhaust their resources, but I hope not."

If you should ask a German where the custom of sending Christmas cards originated, he would tell you "in Germany." And he would point you to those, good, bad and indifferent, which are imported from his country, and would speak especially of the Hildersheimer cards, which are so well known among dealers. Hamburg is a famous place to order from; and everybody who is familiar with the display at the holiday season, knows whence come those mice and storks and frogs, and ridiculous blue-bottle flies, doing such funny things; those imps performing tricks; and the many with quaint interiors, and peasants in gay dresses. Some of these are appropriate to Christmas, but the most are only irresistibly comic and queer.

It was indeed an old German custom to remember friends with cards. But in other countries they have

long done the same. Not necessarily at Christmas, however. The Chinese, who know nothing of the meaning of such a day, have a fashion probably as old as their empire itself. In all the Chinese laundries among us are to be seen on the walls flaming red papers marked with black characters. These are the cards received on New Year, which remain there until the next anniversary comes round. Mr. Ko-



Kun-Hua, the mandarin at Harvard University, keeps up the national custom, and on our New Year's day (which is not the same as in China, sends his servant to the houses of his American friends, with handsome flowered cards inscribed in Chinese and English, with his good wishes, on the prescribed red paper, and carried in a red cloth.

The Japanese have caught the Christmas idea; and within the last year or two there have appeared many Japanese cards, rich in such designs as we see on vases, fans and cabinets. But most of those for sale are made where the beautiful "Pekin China" ware is made — in England. There are, however, places where the genuine things are to be had; Boston has one store which imports them directly from Tokio.

It is not difficult to distinguish the real article; for though the imitation may be cleverly done, no imitators can manufacture the peculiar paper of which the Japanese cards are made. The cards are of the ordinary oblong shape, or in scallops, or leaf forms, and each one shows that it was cut separately by hand. No two are just alike, and no two fit to-

gether. The designs are ingenious, as might be expected, and the colors have a peculiar richness such as our artists cannot give. In every one of the pictures there are some little bits which do not at first catch the eye. For instance, on one of the superbly painted branches of flowers may be discovered a frog, holding fast by one arm while with the other he reaches a fish-line as far out as he can, to catch a crab in the water below. In another a spider is offering a fan to a bird; a fly up in a tree has a lantern, which he is letting down to a young bird on the back of an old one; and a grasshopper is trying to overtake one of his comrades to hold an umbrella over his head. In every one there is some little by-play of this kind.

If you were to ask an Englishman where this great card movement started, he would probably tell you in his country, from the fact that cards have for several years been in use there as Christmas tokens. But there was nothing of any special account, or of any artistic value, either there or anywhere on the other side of the water, until Mr. Louis Prang put his energies into the work.

It will have to be claimed, then, in some sense, as among "Boston notions;" and he must have the credit of its development.

He started in a very modest way, about seven years ago, with floral cards on a black ground — a great many of you have some of the identical cards stored away among your souvenirs. And very handsome they are too: such natural scarlet geraniums, such perfect daisies, and sprays of apple-blossoms on the solid background of black! They are by no means to be disparaged, though the business has made such astonishing progress since. The work had the same qualities of thoroughness and fidelity then as now.

Such was the small beginning. But they "took" at once. He introduced them into England (the first of the kind ever seen there), without any name, and they were known in the market simply as "American cards." They immediately became popular; perhaps more so there and elsewhere in Europe than here. And for the same reason they have kept their hold. In Europe all classes love flowers. In Germany every villager has his bit of

flower garden — if he has the means, a small conservatory; at any rate, his window plants. In England it is the same. The London dressmakers who have only an humble dark room, invariably have a few pots of flowers in their window. To such people these cards appealed.

And Mr. Prang's flower cards are called the finest in the world. He now has persons employed on them who are not only artists, but botanists; and the pictures they produce are as beautiful and faithful as skill and study can make them. These re productions are only chromos, it is true, but are the most careful copies of excellent work. Nothing but the original hand-painted piece can surpass them.

Cards painted by hand must always command a price too high for the purses of the many, and any considerable demand for them could not be met. As it is, several of our publishing houses employ their own artists on the preparation of these choice things, which are often done on ivory, or mounted on the finest board or on a lustrous back of satin. Among the artists whose names do not appear, are women who do this for their daily bread, drawing and coloring

from life our field and garden flowers. There are touching histories of some whose patient hands are busy over this dainty employment.



WHO RECEIVE CHRISTMAS CARDS.

Up in close attics, and even in sick-rooms, they are putting the lovers of beautiful forms under obligation to them for those

groups of delicious lilies, the wild roses, the blood-red cardinal flowers and golden-rod; the very sight of which in the shop windows brings up memories of rambles in the country, and the glory of summer days.



WHO RECEIVE CHRISTMAS CARDS.

Specialties in Christmas cards each year make their appearance, beginning in price at two cents

and ranging up to a dollar or more. But those from ten or fifteen to twenty-five cents have the widest sale. One house brings out an imitation birch-bark card with rustic design; another in screen form, with Japanese scenes; leaflets, panels, heavy cards with India-ink borders, or a gilt or silver back-ground; a novelty if possible.

About two years ago the Boston firm of S. W. Tilton & Co. issued a series of "Outline Design Cards" for studies and decorative purposes, which have met with a good deal of favor. The work was by Miss Burlingame. They are graded and are furnished in packages of six, together with a set of colors, and directions for using, so that any ingenious girl, even a child, can paint her own cards. The first is very simple, but an extremely pretty thing. A little girl in a sort of Mother Hubbard cap, a trig coat with big pocket and buttons, a kerchief pinned round her shoulders, huge muff in one hand and stick in the other, is starting off on a journey, reminding one of Jeanie Deans trudging on foot up to London. In the order of progression, the designs become more difficult; and such animated

and absurd scenes appear as a snow landscape with a polar bear bowing like a dancing-master, while he pays the compliments of the season to three penguins.

Of the imported cards, those most familiar are the De La Rue, the Kate Greenaway, and the Marcus Ward. The De La Rues are delicate and mellow, rather than original or vigorous. They are apt to represent figures of tall, slender-limbed young women in soft drapery, and the colors have a kind of Pompeiian richness. They are dreamy-looking and æsthetic; and there is a satiny softness about the finish which gives to all of them the same general characteristics.

The Kate Greenaway cards belong with the age where nursery rhymes are a delight. Everybody knows now her old-fashioned little folks, with their distractingly pretty, quaint clothes. She, too, usually has human figures, but hers are children. Those small boys and girls, working in the garden, going to market, off on a holiday, walking in the fields, tending dolls, out under umbrellas, playing at housekeeping, doing everything that their elders do, in such a wise, odd way, in such sober mimicry, such

make-believe — who does not know and admire them?

The Marcus Ward cards are spoken of as English, but they are really produced in Ireland. The paper-mills and lithographic establishment of the firm are in Belfast, though scarcely an Irishman is to be found on their staff of artists and designers, but mostly English and Germans. Their cards come both in the single form and in the folded, where you have a whole series opening in panels. Some of the heads and landscapes are exquisite, appearing to have been copied from distinguished artists; and the card itself is often of finish so choice that no other surpasses it.

The three kinds, with the Hildersheimers from Germany, make the leading lines from Europe.

But we must come back to the greatest card enterprise in the world — that of Mr. Prang, which has grown like the famous bean-stalk of the story-book. His heart was in it from the first, and he had ideas of his own: the main thing was to get artists who would work them out. A better class of these began to come into the service, and within the last two or

three years some of the best have tried their hand. More still have become practically interested during this last year, for he has doubled his previous amount for prizes, offering $4000.

The competition for prizes gave a great start to the business everywhere. It had long been in his mind, and he only waited until he felt sure that there would be artists enough to compete to make it worth while. The offer made in the spring of 1880 was the first of the kind ever made by anybody. Since then, Raphael Tuck in England has followed his example.

For the prizes of $1000, $500, $300 and $200, nearly seven hundred designs were sent in, of which, besides those of the successful competitors, he bought about twenty-five, which will be brought out at some future time.

These prize cards have been so many times described that it need only be said that the first, by Miss Rosina Emmett, was a group of choir boys singing a Christmas anthem, and the accessories of an angel announcing the glad news to a shepherd. The stars and passion-flowers were introduced with admi-

rable taste. The next, by Alexander Sandier,had no religious idea, but represented a little girl in much scarlet and white fur, kissing her finger-tips to you, while she gives good wishes; and it is very sweet and winning.

These two may be taken as types of the two distinct classes of cards which began to divide public favor, crowding a little upon the floral cards which had hitherto held the market.

In the second competition, Mr. Prang paid the same sum in prizes again, and a new feature was developed; namely, a Christmas card of a character so distinctively artistic that it would answer just as well for a panel, or a wall picture, as for the holiday occasion. The design which won the first, has been much criticised, as wanting both in the religious element and in any fitness to Christmas. But as indicating another phase in the card enterprise, it is artistic in every respect.

About twenty-five hundred designs were offered in the second competition, though not by that number of individuals, some artists sending more than one. Of this list, fifteen hundred, more or less, were re-

jected by the judges, and the others were placed on exhibition. Mr. Prang bought only fifteen or twenty.

It was one of the noticeable things, that nearly all had human figures; and as it takes an artist to draw a figure, there were lamentable failures. In many, otherwise commendable, the design was so complicated that the eye did not catch the meaning — one had to ask what it was. Others would have been well enough in their place, but were out of place there.

It was pitiable to see how many people without talent or taste, dared to compete for a thousand-dollar prize. One old lady of seventy was sure she should get it; but after experimenting with a picture, her aspirations came down to the second, and then she applied to a professional artist to touch it up for her.

There were the most crude and also the most absurd things offered. Angels with wings heavy enough to drag them to the earth; strange mixtures of things ancient and modern; a bust of Cæsar Augustus; a Holy Family with the Star-spangled-

banner in the background, and General Garfield on his way to the White House.

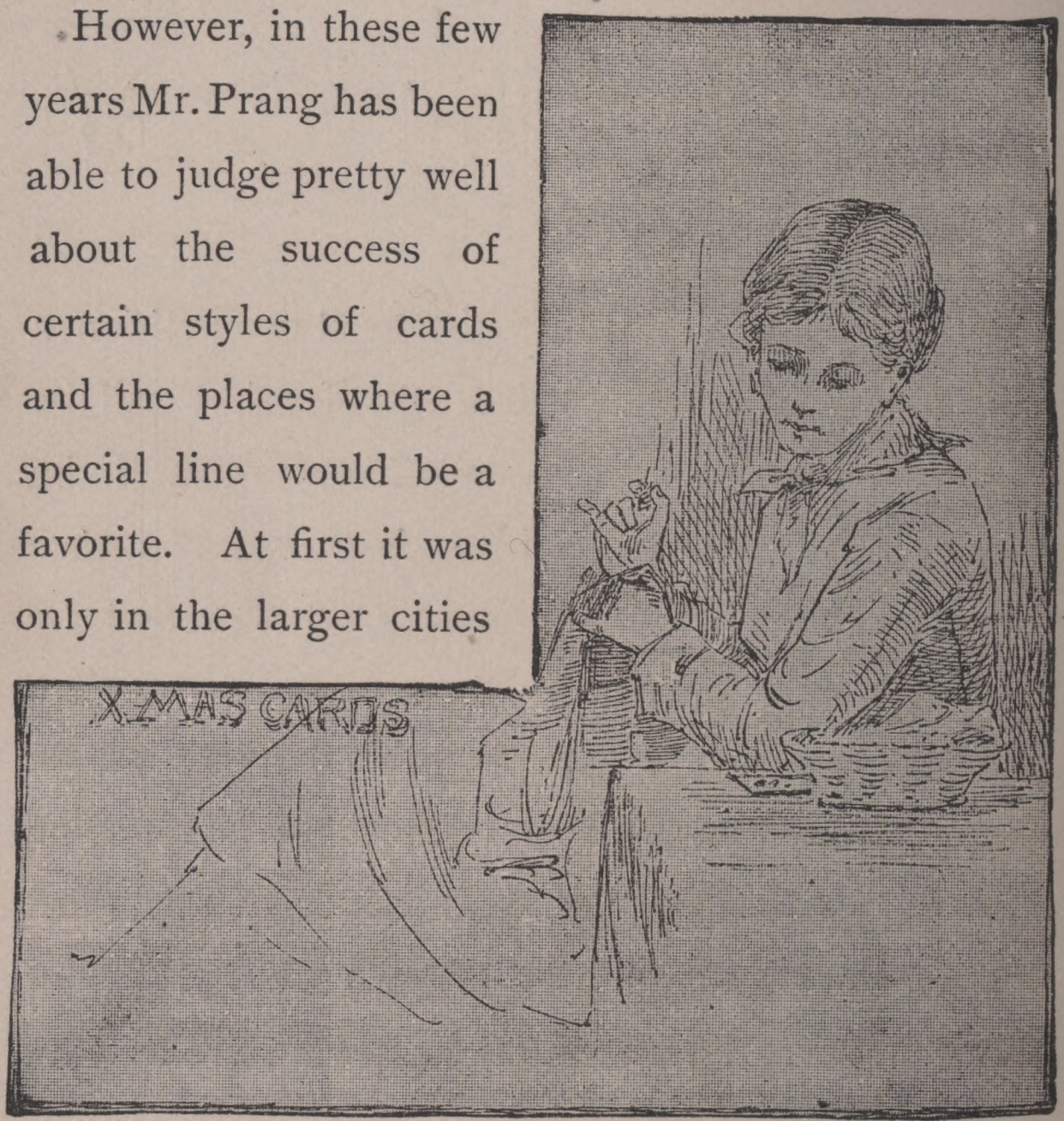


WHO APPRECIATE CHRISTMAS CARDS.

In the third competition a double set of prizes will be awarded; the first will be decided by a vote of artists and critics, the second by the direct vote of the people. At this date — the date when this article goes into type — the drawings of this third competition are on exhibition in New York city. About fifty of the seven hundred designs which were sent in, have been selected for the display. Each design is numbered before it is hung in the gallery, and every visitor is

invited to write the number of the drawing which has pleased him most, on a slip of paper, and deposit it in a box before he leaves. In this way Mr. Prang, always painstaking and conscientious, hopes fully to gauge the popular tastes, and to give the people the cards that they best like.*

However, in these few years Mr. Prang has been able to judge pretty well about the success of certain styles of cards and the places where a special line would be a favorite. At first it was only in the larger cities



*The Prizes have been awarded; and it will interest our readers to know that the Second and Third Artists' Prizes went to the lady who illustrated this article, Miss L. B. Humphrey.

that there was much demand for them. Now the orders come from every direction; and last year the sales of this house alone were over five millions.

A visit to his establishment in Roxbury, as the holiday time draws near, will give one an idea of the magnitude to which the Christmas-card business has grown.

It takes three months to get one of those pictures through all the processes. In one long room a row of artists, each in his own little nook, at his own window, is busy over something beautiful, tracing it by means of the sheet of gelatine, perhaps. Designs are constantly coming in. Mr. Prang is prepared to take the best from any part of the world. They arrive from London, Berlin, Munich, Dresden; and one lady has sent good work from county Galway, lately associated with land-leaguers and "Boycotting."

In different departments the presses are going, and sheets of cards are being taken off and passed on for some further development. They go through processes enough fully to bewilder the looker-on before they come out in their finished state.

Fifty or sixty girls occupy the packing-rooms,

putting the cards in boxes, or otherwise preparing for sending them off on their short or long journeys — perhaps to the nearest city, perhaps to an agent in Australia. And it is difficult to make one's way through and out of the bustling place.

Then, when you have been to the machine shop, and have seen in rough a huge sample of the stone — a kind of limestone with some clay in it, which comes from a deep quarry in Germany — which is so important in this great business, you are invited by Mr. Prang to "the Library."

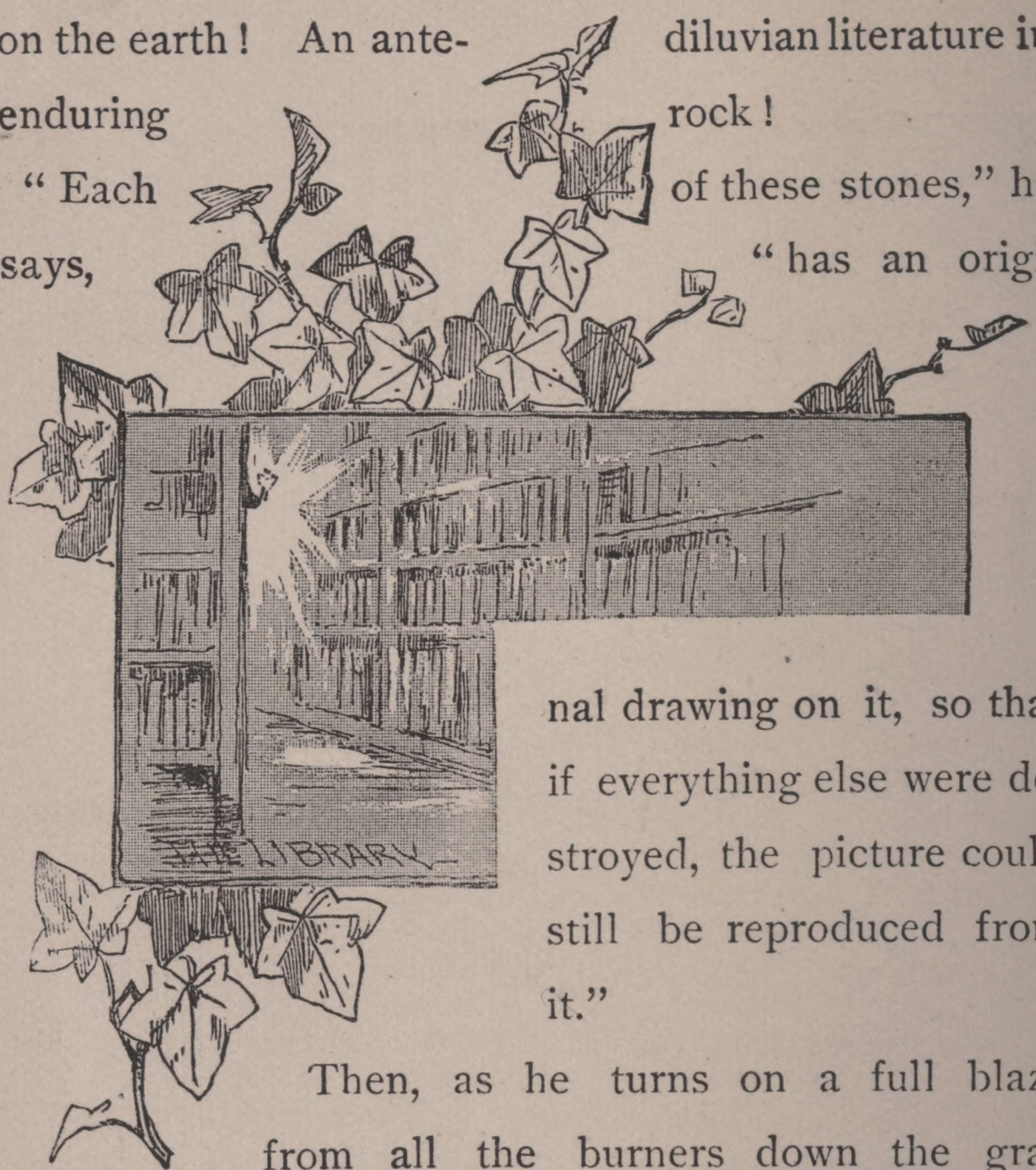
You are conducted by him down to the basement to a cellar-like quarter, wholly foreign to any purpose or likeness of a library. In the dimness you can discern nothing that looks like a book. You are at the entrance of a half-subterranean passage, scarcely wide enough for you to walk in, and stretching off in gloomy, chill perspective. But when he lights the gas, you see that it is lined with tablets of gray stone, each on its own individual shelf, laid up with the order of masonry. Like petrified volumes in solid folio, weighty, austere, left over from some age when there were giants



CHRISTMAS CARDS IN STATE PRISON.

on the earth! An ante-diluvian literature in enduring rock!

"Each of these stones," he says, "has an original drawing on it, so that if everything else were destroyed, the picture could still be reproduced from it."



Then, as he turns on a full blaze from all the burners down the gray vista, he puts the question, with a twinkle of merriment in his eye, — "And what do you think of the Library?"

TWO LITTLE TRUNKS.

BESSIE was hot; Bessie was tired; and—yes, I am sorry to say it, but it is true that Bessie was cross!

It was no wonder, either, poor little dear! for she had been in the cars for three whole days, all the way from Chicago; and this last day, from New York to Boston, was the most trying of all.

The wind was the wrong way; for instead of fanning Bessie's hot cheeks, it blew great clouds of black smoke into the car, and then went flying off over the hills, laughing at the mischief it had done. Bessie's face was as sooty as a chimney-sweep's, her little blue bonnet was covered with black specks, and as for her frock, you would hardly have known that it had ever been white.

Bessie had looked through her picture-books three

times, and had become so tired of her beloved doll Rosabell, that she threw her under the seat, breaking off the point of her beautiful aquiline nose. Papa picked up Doll Rosabel and put her in mamma's satchel; then he picked up Bessie, and put her in his own lap. Bessie laid her little sooty face against papa's white shirt-front, and was just beginning to dream that she was in her own little crib in Boston, and at the same time sitting at aunt May's tea-table in Chicago eating strawberries and cream, when suddenly the crib and tea-table both toppled over, and Bess found herself sitting on papa's shoulder, while papa himself was shaking hands with all his might, with a tall gentleman, who had just entered the car, leading a little boy.

Before Bess fairly knew what had happened, she and the little boy were sitting together on the seat opposite, with a bag of pea-nuts, a paper of candy, and a fresh picture-book between them, while the gentleman was telling her papa and mamma all about the little boy.

"I think you must remember our fellow-clerk, Henry Bryant," the gentleman was saying; "he and

his wife both died in Chicago a few weeks since, leaving little Bennie, their only child, absolutely alone in the great city. His nearest relative is an aunt living in Maine, and to her the father directed that the boy should be sent. He planned the journey with the greatest precision; telegrams are sent in advance all along the route, so that wherever he stops, friends meet him and forward him to the next junction. He carries letters commending him to the care of railway officials, and of strangers — though so far, it has not been necessary to use them — and wears a badge, engraved with his name and destination. He fully understands the use of all these precautions, and could, I believe, take care of himself in an emergency. Bryant wrote me an affecting letter, referring to our old friendship, and commending the child to my especial care.

"How I wish we had known about him!" said Bessie's mamma; "we could have brought him all the way from Chicago with us."

"Well," said the gentleman, "I am going to Providence; and if you will take him in charge as far as Boston, I shall be greatly obliged. I have really no

fears for his safety; but it will please him to have a little companion. His baggage is checked to Boston; and he will remain there a few days, that the journey may not be so fatiguing, and then go to Hallowell by express. My brother James will meet him at the depot, so he need be no trouble to you whatever."

Of course Bessie's papa and mamma said that they would be very happy to take care of Bennie, and as for Bessie they thought she would be very glad of a little companion.

Miss Bess eyed her new acquaintance somewhat critically. He had freckles, and Bess did not like freckles; but then he had a bright smile, and she did like bright smiles very much. Besides she had listened attentively to the gentleman's long story, and though she did not know the meaning of half the big words he used, she understood that Bennie was travelling alone, and that greatly increased her respect for him. She knew that *she* could never have found her way to Chicago, alone — it was nothing much to go to Boston — Bessie had lived in Boston all her life; but Bennie was going to Maine!



TWO SCENES IN A COMEDY.

Bess did not know where Maine was, exactly — it might be a part of Boston; but yet for all she knew, it might be in Europe, and she knew that Europe was a great way off, for mamma and papa had been there.

But Bessie wanted to talk, so she began the conversation.

"Is that your papa?" she asked, pointing to the tall gentleman.

"No," said Bennie, "I haven't any papa, nor any mamma."

"I have — that's them; they're the only papa and mamma I've got;" and Bess looked quite pensive, as she thought how near she was to being an orphan.

"I b'lieve," was the next remark, "your papa says you're going somewheres by 'spress —"

"I told you I hadn't any papa," interrupted Bennie, indignantly —

"You'll have to be nailed up in a box," continued Bess, sublimely indifferent to the interruption, "and they'll have to hammer and hammer, and hammer to get you out again. They'll leave some holes though

for you to breath through. I had some rabbits come that way."

Bessie had supposed that Bennie would be very much impressed by her superior knowledge; but he did not seem to be impressed in the least. He just laid back his head and laughed as hard as he could.

"O, you little goosey!" he said.

That was not a polite thing to say, certainly. Bess was dreadfully mortified, indeed, she mentally resolved that she would never speak to Bennie again, as long as she lived; and she didn't for two whole minutes.

What would she say to this little boy, who had travelled so far, and who knew so much?

"I've got a little trunk of my own," she remarked, after a pause; "it's black; it's got 'B. B.' on it, for my name — Bessie Blake."

"My trunk's black, too," said Bennie; "it's got 'B. B.' on it too, for my name — Bennie Bryant."

"Are the letters made out of brass nails?" asked Bessie.

"Yes."

"So's mine; they're just as bright!"

The conversation flagged somewhat after this. At last Bessie had a bright idea — something that she was sure would make an impression.

"My mamma's been to Europe; she went in a ship. She staid ten or 'leven years; left me with ganma. I've seen a ship. You ever seen one?"

Bennie did not answer this question; he was busy fumbling in the breast of his coat.

"I must look at my watch. I want to see what time it is."

"My watch!" Bessie fairly withered. *Had* this little boy a real watch like a man's? It seemed quite in keeping with his wonderful adventures, if he had. But when the watch appeared she was greatly relieved to find that it was only a little brass plate, with letters and figures on it.

"Pof!" said Bessie scornfully; "that's noffin'! 'Twon't tick! I've got one that'll go when you wind it up with a key — only the key's lost."

"But mine's really a *check*," said Bennie; "it's to get my trunk with when I get to Boston. I must give it to the man that meets me, and he'll get my trunk for me."

"Will he give it back to you?" asked Bessie, much interested.

Bennie didn't know.

"Oh, yes!" said Bennie; "he'll give it back when I go on again."

Just then the conductor called out "Providence;" and Bennie's friend came up to say good-by.

"Papa," said Bessie, pulling his sleeve, "why don't we have checks to buy our trunks with!"

"Oh, we have! don't bother your wise little head about that, Pet, I've got them in my pocket."

"One for my little trunk, too?"

"Yes; and it's just as big as mine and mamma's."

"I want it tied in my button-hole for a watch like Bennie's.

"No, no," said papa very decidedly; "you would be sure to lose it, and then I couldn't buy your little trunk."

Bess put up her lip and prepared for a long, loud and copious fit of weeping.

Papa glanced around the car uneasily. When Bess once began to cry, it was hard to stop her; and though at home the rule was that she was never to

have what she cried for, she was beginning to realize that in the cars, she usually did get what she cried for.

"She has been so good for the last two hours," said papa to mamma, "that it is a pity to spoil it. Suppose I let her have it?"

But mamma was asleep with her head pillowed upon a shawl, and she offered no suggestions.

Papa opened mamma's satchel and found a piece of black ribbon, and taking a check out of his pocket, he spoke gravely:

"Now, Bessie, if I tie this in your button-hole, will you promise not to take it out until we get to Boston — not for a minute? If you do, you will lose your trunk, remember."

"Yes, ma'am, I wont," said Bessie solemnly. She always said "ma'am," when she meant to be particularly polite, though she did not always put the word in the right place.

Papa slipped the ribbon through the check, and tied it into Bessie's button-hole with several strong knots.

"There, she can't get that off, if she tries,"

thought he. Then he went into the smoking-car, and didn't come back for two hours.

It was nearly dark when they reached Boston. Lina, Bessie's Swedish nurse, was standing on the door-step watching for them.

"Ach! Miss Pessie," cried Lina, covering her with kisses, "you is my little tarling! Ain't you tirty! I neve', neve', seen you look so pefore."

"Take Miss Bessie right up stairs," said mamma. "Give her a good bath, change all her clothes and put on her wrapper; then bring her down to tea. I'll have her trunk carried up to the nursery. Why, how rusty that new trunk looks! These baggage-men are so careless!"

Yes; Bessie was dirty! I do not think Lina "eve', eve'," *had* seen her look so before. The black dust had got down her neck, and up her sleeves; it had even got inside of her stockings.

Lina, who was as methodical as the majority of nursery girls are, gave her a thorough washing and rubbing, wrapped her in a blanket, and then proceeded to open the trunk to take out her clothes.

"Ach! this is one hard key to *twist!* Mien cracious!" Lina started back in dismay as, yielding to her efforts, the trunk at last flew open.

What do you suppose there was in that little black trunk?

Two nice little sailor suits — jacket and pants complete; one fine gray suit; twelve pairs of boys' stockings; a pair of pretty slippers, with fawns' heads on the instep; a pair of base-ball shoes; a pair of fine kid boots; a pair of pink-and-white suspenders; boxes of collars, cuffs and handkerchiefs; six cambric shirts; four cambric waists; and under all these picture-books, wind-mills, tops and balls without number — everything, in short, that a little boy could use — but not a sign of any of Bessie's clothes, not a thread of her little blue-and-white wrapper.

"Why, what in the world! —" said mamma, who had come in to see if Bessie was dressed, forgetting, in her excitement that "by-words" are not elegant, "How under the sun did those things get into — but Bessie's trunk was lined with pink paper — this is blue — Papa, just come here for a moment!"

Papa came. He stared helplessly at the trunk for one minute; then he turned to Bessie who sat on the floor, peeping out of her blanket.

"Bessie! *Did* you take that check out of your button-hole?"

Bess looked solemn. "Me and Bennie changed *watches*," she said at last, falteringly; "it was to remember each other by — I forgot, papa, truly, truly, I did — sides, his was just like mine!"

"Now!" said papa, bringing down his foot with a tremendous stamp, "*do* you see what you have done? You have got Bennie's trunk, and he has got yours."

"William," said mamma, "don't scold *her;* it was some one else who was careless. Besides, it is not as bad as it might be. Do you know Mr. James Wilson's place of business? That was the gentleman's name, wasn't it?"

Papa rushed to the Directory.

"St—t—t—t," clicked Lina between her teeth; "Now, Miss Pessie, you gone and lost all your pretty clo'es. Now, I'll have to put on your ni'gown, and you'll have to stay in ped."

"No," said mamma, laughing, "it is not quite so

bad as that; but yet it is so near her bed-time, perhaps she had better go. She can have her supper up here. One of her night-gowns is in *my* trunk."

"Thirty-nine James Wilsons!" said papa, looking up from the Directory. "How in time am I to know which one it is?"

By six o'clock the next evening, papa had seen or written to every one of the James Wilsons; and not one of the thirty-nine ever heard of a little boy by the name of Bennie Bryant.

What could it mean?

The next day was Sunday, and papa could do nothing. On Monday evening, two advertisements appeared in the "Transcript," the editors having obligingly put them together, that they might answer each other.

This is the way they read:

LOST!—Will the friends of the little girl whose trunk, marked "B. B." was taken by mistake from the Boston and Albany depot, on Friday, communicate, for the advantage of both parties, with,

A. B. C., Transcript Office.

FOUND.—The friends of the little boy whose trunk marked "B. B." was taken by mistake from the Boston and Albany R. R. depot, Friday evening, are requested to communicate with,

X. Y. Z., Transcript Office.

That evening a gentleman called to see Bessie's papa — the gentleman who had met Bennie at the depot. His name was not James Wilson, at all, but James Clements, he being Mr. Aleck Wilson's half-brother.

Everybody laughed a great deal during the interview, now that the trouble was over; and Bess began to think that the whole affair was a very nice joke.

"So this is the little girl who forgot her promise," said the gentleman, smiling, as he stroked her head.

"And made all the trouble," said papa, smiling too, though he tried to look stern.

Then the gentleman told them all about Bennie, how he had not even a night-gown out of his trunk, but had to wear a long one of Mrs. Clements's; and how he had to go to bed, like the miser that we read of, to have his shirt washed and ironed for Sunday.

"Well," said mamma, "I always thought Friday was an unlucky day for travelling; I shall never go on a journey on Friday again, if I can help it."

But Mr. Clements thought that the children would have changed checks just the same if it had been Monday or Tuesday.

HOW THE LITTLE STEADMANS HAD A GOOD TIME.

RENA and Carrie Steadman lived in Cincinnati, but they were born in Massachusetts, and loved Thanksgiving Day as only little New England girls can; and they thought of it all the year through with as much pleasure as they thought of Christmas. It was pleasant to think, not only of the day itself, but of the two or three days before it, for then Mrs. Steadman, who always heard their lessons herself, gave them a holiday, and went into the kitchen and helped to make the good things for the dinner. Rena and Carrie were allowed to help — to stone raisins and pare apples, and chop the mince; and every one looked so happy and busy, and there was such a baking and boiling and steaming and stirring, and such a good smell in the kitchen of spices and pas-

try, that Thanksgiving Day seemed to extend from Tuesday morning till Thursday night.

Then it was so nice, when the day really came, to have their dear papa sit down before the fire in his dressing-gown and slippers after breakfast, just as he did Sundays, instead of hurrying off to business; and the story that he told them before church-time was always a part of Thanksgiving Day. Then the walking to church was another treat, for then their papa would explain to them how Thanksgiving Day came to be, or tell them of some Thanksgiving Day in his own childhood; and in church, although they were too little to understand very much of the sermon, they enjoyed the beautiful music, and loved to think that they had come to church to thank their Heavenly Father for all His care through the year. Then walking from church with their uncle and aunt and cousins (who always dined with them Thanksgiving Day, because they had the biggest parlors for the after-dinner frolic). And then the dinner — the two big turkeys, the chicken pie — the *everything* so nice. After that the games, one coming after another, till the winter daylight faded, and the gas was lighted,

and still game after game, papa and mamma, uncle and aunt playing with the children till nine o'clock! That was very late for Rena and Carrie, for they always went to bed at seven o'clock on other nights; and after all else, the happy, sleepy undressing, with mamma to kiss them and tuck them in, and Thanksgiving Day was over! Do you wonder that they loved to think of it?

But one autumn, when Rena was ten and Carrie eight years old, early in October their mamma became very ill, and for many days the doctors thought she could not live; but after much suffering and pain she finally grew better, and by the first of November was able to be bolstered up in bed and see the little girls for a while each day; and in two weeks more, she sat in a rocking-chair, and began to move slowly about her room. One evening, as the little girls sat in their father's lap, one on each knee, he said,

"I am sorry, my little girls, that you will lose your Thanksgiving frolic and dinner this year. Of course you will have to, for the new cook that has come since mamma was sick, knows very little, and could not get dinner without mamma, and she will not be strong

enough to come down-stairs to eat, or see you play, even if the cook could get along without her; but you will really have a better Thanksgiving than you have ever had, for you will know better than you ever did before, what a *real* Thanksgiving out of your hearts is, when you look at mamma almost well again."

Of course Rena and Carrie felt sorry to lose the fun that they always had; but they really felt, as their papa said, so joyful and thankful for their mamma, that they didn't mind.

But the next day, as soon as their papa went to his business, their mamma sent for them. They went quickly, wondering what mamma could want so early, for it was generally ten o'clock before they were sent for. They found her already sitting up in her wrapper, with paper and pencil, and her purse. She smiled as they came in, and said,

"Little girls, I have a plan: I want to surprise papa, and you must help me. We will have a real Thanksgiving dinner up here in my room, and quiet games after it, and *you little girls* shall get the dinner! And it shall all be a secret and surprise to papa!"

Oh, how happy Rena and Carrie were! too happy

at first to wonder what their mamma could mean by *their* getting the dinner; but in a minute their questions came fast enough:

"Why, mamma, how *can* we get the dinner?" "Who will teach us to cook?" "Where will we get the things?" "How can we have dinner up here? There isn't any table."

One after the other the questions came without stopping, till their mamma laughed and said,

"There, there! stop a minute and listen to me; it can all be done if we don't get into a hurry. Thanksgiving comes the twenty-ninth — this is the twenty-second; that gives us six days besides Sunday. Now I have written down everything that is first needed at the grocer's and market: you can take the paper to Betsey and tell her to get the things as soon as she has finished her work; and when they come you may let me know."

Away ran the little girls, still wondering what their mamma could mean by *their* getting the dinner, but knowing that they must not ask too many questions. Betsey was the chambermaid, a bright, willing girl, and she hurried through her work, and soon came in

from market and grocery with a piece of beef, a piece of suet, a little bucket of sweet cider, and a paper of raisins; and after her came the market-man with a bushel of rosy apples.

Up ran the little girls to their mamma, who said, "Now tell Mary (the cook) to boil the meat slowly till it is tender, and then put it away to cool; and then come back to me and bring the raisins and a bowl, and the chopping-bowl and knife, and the knife that Mary peels apples with, and tell Betsey to come with you with a basket of apples."

It was a pretty long message, but they remembered it all, and were soon back in their mamma's room with all the things.

"Now, little girls," said she, "sit down quietly, and I will tell you just what we will do. I am quite well, only not strong, and it won't hurt me any to have you in the room several hours at a time if you will not talk too much. I can show you so that by doing a little each day, you can make all the mince, mix the pumpkin, and peel and cut the apples, for mince, apple, and pumpkin pies. Then you can make the stuffing, and stuff the turkey. We will get

along this year without any pudding or chicken pie, and have just a turkey and vegetables and three kinds of pie. You are too little to make pie-crust; but I will have Mary bring the things up here and I will show her how to make enough crust for two pies of each kind. Then when Thanksgiving Day comes, while papa is at church Mary and Betsey will bring the two kitchen tables up-stairs, and as they are just of a size, they can be put together and make one long one, and we will have dinner just ready to put on when papa comes in from church."

Rena and Carrie listened with their eyes bright with happiness, and as soon as their mamma finished speaking, asked both together, "When may we begin?"

"Right away," said Mrs. Steadman. "You, Rena, can peel those apples and cut them off the cores, and you, Carrie, can stone the raisins."

The little girls went right to work, and by dinner-time had the apples peeled and chopped, and the raisins stoned for the mince.

That was Thursday. Friday they chopped the meat and the suet: that was slow work, for it had to

be, oh, so fine; but they took turns at the chopping-bowl, and before dinner had it all done.

Saturday they ground and measured the spices and mixed the mince, and put it away finished. Oh, how happy they felt!

But they were almost afraid to say a word before their papa, for they thought all the time so much about their wonderful secret that they were very much afraid that they would say it out without thinking. So every night, as soon as they heard the front door shut, Rena would say, "Remember!" and Carrie would say, "Yes, *remember!*" and then they would run to meet him.

One night Carrie came very near saying, "Thanksgiving will be *so* nice in mamma's room;" but she had only said "Tha" — when Rena gave her *such* a punch, and off she cut it right there with only a weak little "a-a" to finish it off with; and then they both began to laugh so that they had to stuff their handkerchiefs into their mouths and get around behind their papa's chair to keep from being seen. Oh, it was a happy week!

Monday they could not work, for Mary was too

busy with her washing to have them running through the kitchen.

But early Tuesday morning they begun to peel the big yellow pumpkin that the market-man brought Saturday night; Mary quartered it for them and took out the seeds, and then they took two quarters of it up-stairs, and one did one and one the other; and when it was all cut in pieces they took it down to Mary to stew. Then when it was tender they took it up-stairs again with the sieve and a big dish, and eggs and an egg-beater, and Carrie strained the pumpkin while Rena beat the eggs. Then their mamma told them just how much milk to put in, and how much sugar and spice; and the pumpkin too was ready for pies.

They set it away in a cool place over night, and Wednesday they peeled and cut the apples for apple pies, and sat by watching while mamma showed Mary how to make the crust. Mary, although she did not know much about cooking, was a good-tempered, kind girl, and was almost as happy in the children's secret as they were themselves, so she did not mind having to carry her baking things up-stairs. It was late

Wednesday afternoon before the turkey was stuffed, but it was at last done, and mamma's room nicely set to rights before papa came in. Rena and Carrie were so certain they should tell their secret if they were long with their papa, that they ran off to bed right after supper and were soon asleep.

The next morning they were up bright and early, and the minute they were dressed, ran to the pantry to look at the row of pies — *their* pies — and the big turkey *they* had stuffed, lying in the pan with his legs tied together ready to go into the oven. "Oh, *isn't* it nice!" said Rena; "won't papa be happy, though!"

"And won't he, though!" said Carrie.

Papa's story was just as nice that morning as usual, but the little girls' heads and hearts were so full that every little while they would forget the story and be wondering if the girls *could* get the tables up-stairs, and if everything would be ready in time.

But the story came to an end, and so did the pleasant church service, and the walk home; and then — Rena's heart beat so fast that she could

hardly speak, and little Carrie kept squeezing her hand while their papa got out his latch-key.

"Mamma is so well," said he, "that I think we can have some little games in her room after dinner. I wonder if poor Mary has tried anything extra in honor of the day. I did not dare send a turkey from market, for I knew she would make it into hash or something as bad. When I get off my coat we will go up and see how dear mamma is."

"Yes, sir," said Rena, trying to speak naturally, and pulling Carrie with her up-stairs — just one peep into mamma's room before papa came up to see if everything was right. Yes, the table was all set, and mamma in a pretty new blue wrapper, and a lace breakfast cap with blue ribbons, looking so pretty. They had only time to see this and get the door shut again, when papa come up-stairs and went into the room with them. Oh, you should have seen his face! *such* a surprised look! And so pleased! And then, when mamma told him *who* made the mince, and fixed the pumpkin and apples, and stuffed the turkey, how he kissed his little girls! Then how fast they talked, and told him how many



"WHAT A SURPRISE IT ALL WILL BE!"

times they had nearly let the secret out, and how once, when he came home a little earlier to dinner, they had to stuff the chopping-bowl into the closet with his boots, to get it out of sight; and how once mamma herself came near letting him know, and ever so much more, till their mouths were so stuffed with dinner that they had to stop talking.

Then after dinner they played Proverbs, and "We've thought of a word that rhymes," and other quiet plays. And the games were not so quiet after all, for they all laughed so, and mamma as much as any of them, and best of all it never made her a bit worse, but she was so well in a few days that she drove out; and the children after that would say, that Thanksgiving always was nice but "mamma's Thanksgiving" was nicest of all.

HOW THE LITTLE STEADMANS SPENT CHRISTMAS.

I HAVE just told you how the little Steadman girls spent Thanksgiving Day. Now I am going to tell you how they spent the very next Christmas.

They had enjoyed, so much, working *themselves* to make Thanksgiving pleasant, that they wanted very much to do something themselves to make the coming Christmas enjoyable in the same way. Before all the other Christmases that they could remember, they had thought a great deal about what they were going to *get*. But this year they determined it should be quite different.

The way they came to think about it was this: They were walking to school together the Monday after Thanksgiving, each with a piece of the mince pie they had made, in a little basket to eat at recess,

and they were talking of what a happy time they had had.

"*I* think," said Rena, "it was the very nicest Thanksgiving we ever had — *wasn't* it fun to see papa's face when he found all we'd done?"

"Wasn't it, though!" said Carrie. "I'll tell you what! Let's do something just *splendid* to surprise him at Christmas too."

"Let's!" exclaimed Rena. "Let's save all our money and buy him a new pair of slippers — I've two ten cents and a quarter — how much have you?"

"I've three five cents, and a ten cents, and my quarter with a hole through it; but I guess that won't make any difference. Do you think we can get a nice pair for that?"

"Oh dear, no," sighed Rena; "for I just remember now seeing mamma pay for *my* last pair of shoes, and I know it was more than that — what *shall* we get?"

"Mamma'll know," said Carrie.

So, as soon as school was out, they both came to mamma to talk the whole thing over. She agreed

with them that they would enjoy their Christmas more if they did something for papa; but the thing was to think what they could get. Mr. Steadman didn't smoke, so they couldn't give a cigar-stand or smoking-cap; and all the other things they could think of either cost too much or were too hard to make. Finally Mrs. Steadman began to smile to herself. Carrie shouted at that:

"*Now* I know mamma has thought of something! What is it, mamma — what is it?"

Mamma laughed then.

"I really don't know whether I have thought of anything or not — the thing I have in mind is such a very funny thing for a present, but I know it will *please* papa more than anything else you could do."

"Tell us — what is it?" cried both children together.

"Would you like to make something, every stitch yourselves, that papa could wear, and every time he put it on, think of the love and patience of his little daughters?"

"Yes, indeed! Yes, indeed!"

"But it will take two half-hours of every day between now and Christmas — maybe more than that — for four weeks! If you begin, will you stick to it and finish?"

"Indeed we will; what is it?"

"Well, then — it's a *night-shirt!*"

Both the little girls' faces looked sober at that. They had thought about neck comforters, and mittens, and wristlets and things made out of pretty, bright worsteds; but just a plain white *night-shirt* was so ugly — and then, as mamma said, it was such a funny thing for a present. Neither of them spoke. Mamma watched their solemn little faces for a minute, and then said:

"The reason I thought papa would be especially pleased by that was, that it would show three things: that you were really learning how to sew; that you were learning patience and perseverance; that your love wasn't all just hugs and kisses, but that you were willing to do what was not very pleasant to show it. I have been intending, as soon as baby was a few weeks older, to begin giving you regular sewing lessons afternoons; for *next* year you will not

get out of school at twelve, and there won't be so much time; and while we have the time we must make the most of it. You must both know how to sew, and the long straight seams and hems on a night-shirt will be splendid to learn on. I will cut and baste them, and sit with you both all the time you sew, and you shall put in every stitch your own selves, and I will only put in the gussets and make the button-holes. You can think about it till to-night, and then, if you want to do it, we will begin to-morrow."

The little girls' faces had been brightening, and now they exclaimed almost together, "Mamma, we needn't wait! we want to do it."

The plan was to work every afternoon two half-hours, with an hour between to play.

So the next day they began. Day after day they worked. When the first half-hour was passed, and Rena had only sewed a finger's length of a seam, and Carrie had had to *rip out all* she had done, they were both ready to sit down and cry and give it all up; but their mamma comforted them, and told them it would go better the next half-hour — and

so it did. Carrie did all she had had to rip, and as much more, and did it so well that Mrs. Steadman said she was surprised at the improvement; and Rena did nearly half as much again as the first half-hour.

So the days passed till the day before Christmas. Some days the work went hard, and the little girls were disheartened, and then again it went so smoothly that it surprised even themselves.

And now the day before Christmas had come; and there the shirts lay, spread out in the sun for the indelible ink-mark of papa's name to dry. Mamma had put in the gussets and made the button-holes the evening before, and all that was left to do was to fold them up and label them. Mamma had made two big labels, as big as her hand, and written in big letters like this:

RENA MADE THIS FOR A CHRISTMAS PRESENT FOR HER PAPA.

CARRIE MADE THIS FOR A CHRISTMAS PRESENT FOR HER PAPA.

And as soon as the marking was dry, she made the shirts into two flat, neat paper bundles and pasted the labels on.



SOME DAYS THE WORK WENT HARD.

The little girls had been so busy and happy making the shirts, that they really had almost forgotten that *they* were to have gifts; and now that the shirts were done it was harder to wait for the time to give them than to wait for their own presents. Their mamma let them spend the afternoon looking through the gay shops, and that helped the time to pass faster; and finally bedtime came, and then morning again — Christmas morning!

Rena woke first, and wasn't long in getting Carrie awake too, and out they jumped, before it was fairly light, to get their stockings from the mantel, then back into bed softly, taking their stockings with them to wait till they heard mother up in her room.

As soon as there was a stir in the next room they called out a "Merry Christmas," and dressed in a hurry for breakfast. I expect most of the children who read this story have a Christmas-tree; but Rena and Carrie never had one. It was very hard to get a tree where they lived, for there were hardly any evergreens; so they had a plan that mamma made up, that they thought was ever so much nicer, for the fun lasted so much longer than

when the things were all spread out at once on a tree. All the presents were done up in paper the night before, and labelled and put into a big clothes-basket and covered with a sheet; and when all the family were gathered after breakfast, it was brought to mamma's seat and she distributed the presents, lifting a corner of the sheet, and drawing out one bundle at a time. She always read the label saying who the present was from, and who it was for, and then the one that it belonged to opened it while the rest gathered around to admire. As there were several uncles and aunts who sent in presents too, it sometimes took nearly two hours to empty the basket.

This morning, at breakfast, Rena and Carrie were even more excited and happy than usual on Christmas mornings, and twice they got to looking at each other and giggling so that if it had been any other morning they would have been in danger of being sent from table; as it was, their papa thought, "Those children have surely got a peep at the little bureau and bedstead; I thought I'd hidden them."

The little girls didn't want much breakfast, and it seemed to them that papa and mamma were very

hungry; but finally they laid their knives and forks down, and they all went into the parlor. There stood the basket, waiting for them, and beside it something covered up that was too big to go in. Mamma knew that the little girls would not half enjoy their own presents till after papa had had his, so she had put the two shirts near the top of the basket. Papa's eyes were on the little girls, and his thoughts quite absorbed in their happiness, when his ear caught the words, "Carrie made this for a Christmas present for her papa." And while he was turning with a look of surprise on his face, mamma took the other bundle out and read, "Rena made this for a Christmas present for her papa," and then handed him both bundles together. How the two little girls watched his face! and what a face it was to watch! Pleased — then, as he unrolled the shirts, puzzled — then a look as if he thought he must have heard wrong — then an exclamation, "Why, mamma! did you say the *children made* these?" Then mamma's answer, "Every stitch, except the gussets and button-holes." Then the pleased look again in his face; then (as he looked

at the little careful stitches, with the thread sometimes rubbed dirty, and here and there a tiny little speck of blood from a finger-prick) the pleased look mixed up with a queer little look about his mouth they had never seen, and his eyes filled, and — papa was crying! at any rate a tear got as far down as his nose, but then he took out his handkerchief and wiped his nose and the tear, all at once.

Dear me — they were so bursting with happiness they almost wanted to leave the rest of Christmas and run off by themselves; but they were brought to their senses by mamma's voice, "Carrie, from mamma," and "Rena, from mamma." They took the bundles and untied them, and there were two beautiful little work-baskets, with needle-book and scissors and thimbles — silver thimbles — they had been sewing with brass ones.

So the emptying of the basket went on, and at the last came the things by the basket, which proved to be a bedstead just big enough for their dolls, and a bureau for their dolls' clothes. They were both beautiful; but it wasn't as nice to get them as to give papa the shirts.

WHAT GRANDMAMMA DID.

IT was the day before my grandmamma's wedding-day. I do not pretend to have any personal recollection of the occasion, but I *have* seen a picture of my grandmamma painted a short time before; and, to do her justice, a prettier or more graceful maiden it has never been my pleasure to behold. She looked a little like the pictures we see of England's queen in *her* girlhood; but—yes, I must say it—prettier, and far more elaborately dressed.

We read a great deal about the simplicity of those early times, but the reports of the great court-balls at which the gentlemen wore wigs, curled and powdered, waistcoats with laced flaps, knee-breeches with silver or paste buckles, ruffled shirts and colored silk stockings; while the ladies wore stiff brocades and pointed waists, farthingales, slippers with heels three

inches high and turned-up toes, and displayed quantities of rich lace, convince at least me that the simplicity was chiefly mythical.

My grandmamma never went to a court-ball, but she felt very grand nevertheless, with her wedding finery spread out around her. The great hair-covered trunk, as roomy as a modern Saratoga, and far more clumsy, stood in her room filled with rich clothing, while three large deal boxes in the hall were stored with household goods, all of home manufacture, and chiefly the work of grandmamma's own hands; piles of blankets as soft and white as snow; patchwork quilts which grandmamma's patient fingers had begun to "piece" when she was five years old; yards of table damask, and dozens of snowy napkins ornamented with bunches of gay flowers.

On the bed lay grandmamma's crowning work—a dress of white linen which she herself had spun, woven, bleached, embroidered all over with bunches of raised flowers, and then cut, fitted and made up in the most approved style. I have a piece of that dress now, and I think I would be a queer figure in it; but grandmamma viewed it with great satisfaction,

and, when she was ninety-five years of age, spoke of it as a great achievement to have spun such fine linen.

The wonder is how one pair of hands could find time to do so much; but grandmamma did not have to practise upon the piano for three hours every day, she was innocent of differential calculus and conic sections; nor did she know that cosmos was evolved from matter. But in spite of all these disadvantages, my grandmamma was an accomplished young lady, though I am not sure that her grammar and spelling were always above criticism; for besides all her spinning and weaving, she was an excellent horsewoman, and could paint a sky-blue dog on a yellow-satin footstool so naturally that you would hesitate about putting your foot on it.

But it was not to discuss my grandmamma's accomplishments that I took up my pen this morning; it was to tell you what my grandmamma did the day before her wedding-day, and you will probably say that it was not worth going through all this description, for Grandmamma was packing her work-basket preparatory to putting it into her trunk, when she missed her embroidery scissors. After looking for them for

some time, she remembered that Millicent Hunt, who was to be her bridesmaid, had taken them home to finish a band which she was embroidering for grandmamma, and had not returned them when she brought the band.

"Very likely Millicent will forget them altogether," said grandmamma to herself; "why shouldn't I go over and get them?"

You see, grandmamma thought a great deal of those little scissors, partly because they were of very dainty workmanship, and partly because Fred Blake —I mean grandpapa—had given them to her.

But why should grandmamma *not* go for them? The way to Millicent's house was just down the garden path, through a little gate which separated the two gardens, and then up the path to Mrs. Hunt's back porch; for grandmamma never thought of such a thing as going to the front door. Why did she hesitate? Why did she steal softly down-stairs, take her cottage-bonnet down from its peg, hide it behind, step softly to the door of the sitting-room where her mamma sat at work, and then turn around and hang her bonnet up again, resolving that she wouldn't go?

Why, you must know that my dear little sixteen-year-old grandmamma had never in her life gone beyond the boundary-fence of that little garden without her mother's permission, and this was the problem which troubled her soul: should or should not she, a young lady on the eve of her wedding-day, go and *ask her mother* if she might go into the next neighbor's house? If she did, she might be laughed at; but if she did not, great-grandmamma might be surprised and grieved; and never having grieved that precious mother by undutiful conduct, she did not wish to begin now. Besides, habit was strong; and to pass through that gate *without* permission really seemed more of a venture that to pass from maidenhood into matrimony with the full consent and blessing of both her parents.

But grandmamma wanted her scissors; I think she also wanted one more walk through those two gardens, and she knew that it would never do for her to go on her wedding-day; that was not to be thought of.

Grandmamma tripped down-stairs and took down her bonnet once more. She had resolved to go into the sitting-room and say carelessly, "Mother, I'm

going over to Millicent's to get my scissors"—that compromise between dignity and respect for parental authority which independent young ladies were just beginning to make.

But the habits of a lifetime were too strong for grandmamma, and after all, the old form fell from her lips:

"Mother, may I go over to Millicent's and get my scissors?"

Without raising her eyes from her work, great-grandmamma nodded, and said, "yes," in just the matter-of-course tone which she would have used to a child five years old; and grandmamma, hiding her blushing face in the depths of her sun-bonnet, hurried away with such a mingled sense of relief and mortification that she never forgot it. I do not think great-grandmamma ever thought of it as anything but perfectly natural that her daughter should have asked her permission. I do not think she would have understood the struggle had grandma told it to her, half as well as I did when she told it to me, seventy years afterwards.

Grandmamma opened Millicent's door for herself,

as was her custom, and, as there was no one in sight, walked unceremoniously through the kitchen, dining-room and hall, up-stairs.

She found her intended bridesmaid the picture of distress, sitting on the floor beside a box containing her costume for the eventful night, which had just arrived from the nearest port in a canoe; for this was in one of the British Provinces, away up the St. John river, before any of the steamboats or railways were built, when the rivers were used as highways.

"O Mary Welles!" cried Millicent, as grandmamma appeared, "I can never stand up with you in this world!"

"Why! What's the matter?"

"Matter enough! Just look!"

Millicent held up one silk-stockinged foot from the toe of which hung a dainty white satin slipper. The foot was small and shapely, but the slipper was smaller still; and though one girl tugged while the other squeezed, it *wouldn't* go on.

"What else have you?" asked grandmamma, as they stopped in hopeless exhaustion.

"Nothing but my patent-leather shoes, and they're



IT WOULDN'T GO ON!

black. I can't pos—si—bly sta—and up;" and poor Millicent burst into tears.

"Yes, you can," said grandmamma resolutely; "stop crying; you'll spoil your eyes and complexion! Isn't there some white satin left of that dress your mother wore at Government House ball?"

Millicent reflected.

"No; but there's a white satin waistcoat of father's that I can have; he only wore it twice; it's too small for him now."

"Let me see it."

Millicent brought the waistcoat, and then—will you believe it?—my grandmamma whisked her scissors out of Millicent's work-basket, and audaciously proceeded to cut up those lovely satin slippers. First she ripped off the pretty rosettes with their mother-of-pearl buckles, then down the back seam to the high heels, and lastly she cut off the satin all around, leaving only a narrow strip along the sole.

"Mary Welles!" cried Millicent in dismay, "what are you going to do?"

By way of reply, grandmamma drew a slipper on a piece of white paper, using the satin one as a pattern,

but making it half an inch larger all around.

"There!" said grandmamma, "don't you see? We must use these soles, and have the uppers large enough to make up for the smallness. Put your foot on that sole, and let me see if it fits."

It did fit perfectly, as Millicent acknowledged with grateful tears in her eyes; and grandmamma cut out a pair of slippers from the discarded white waistcoat, and giving one to Millicent and taking the other herself, proceeded to bind it with white satin ribbon which opportunely turned up among the wedding finery.

"O Mary!" said Millicent, "how clever you are! I really believe there is nothing that you cannot do!"

"Don't you wish we had a machine that would make a pair of slippers in ten minutes?" said grandmamma, ignoring the compliment.

"Who knows but there may be one invented some day!" said Millicent; and both girls laughed merrily at the absurdity of the idea.

Well, those girls worked like machines. I do not think you ever saw fingers fly as theirs did. I do not expect to be believed, but at the end of an hour,

Millicent had a pair of slippers fit for the bride herself. Indeed, grandmamma thought they were rather prettier than hers.
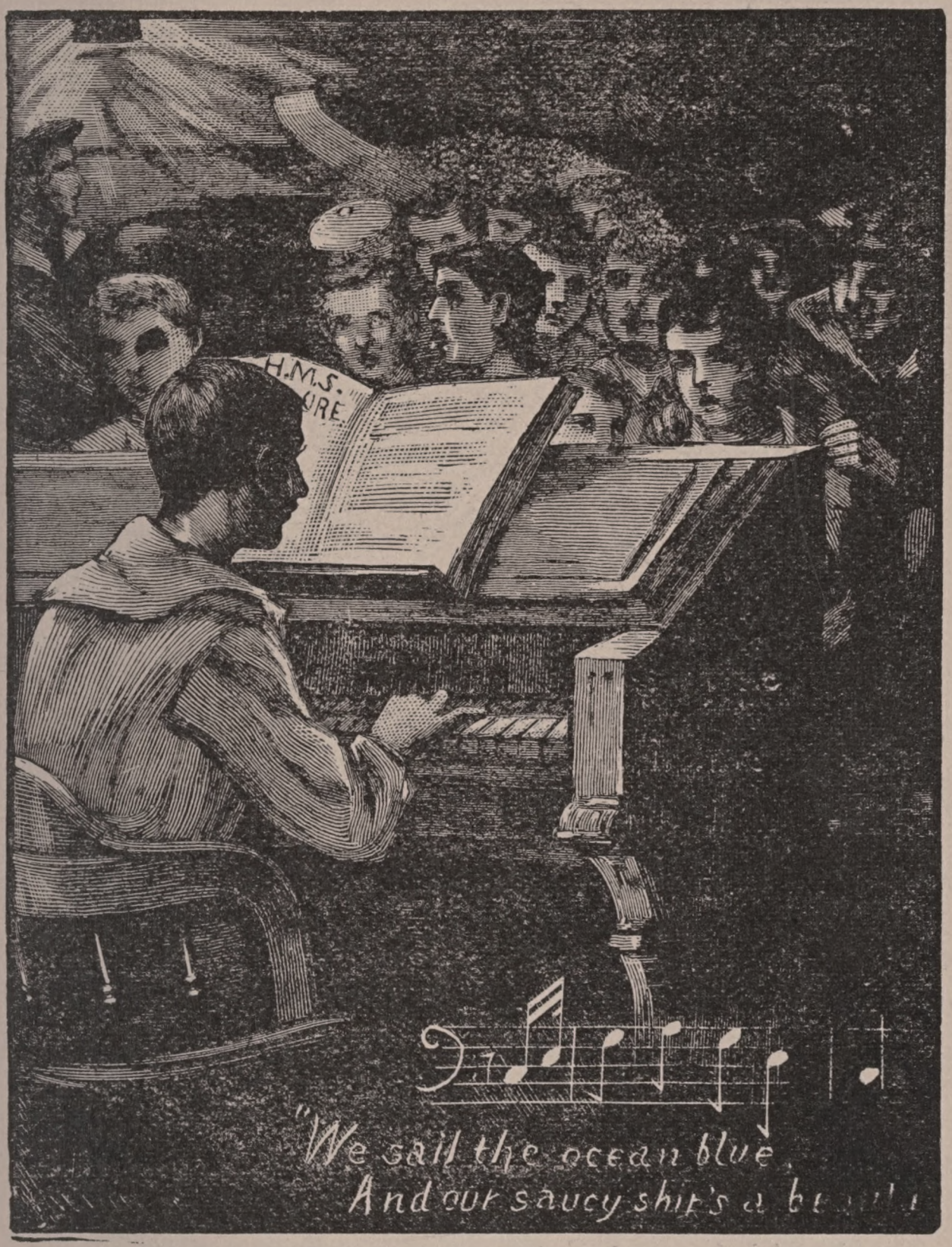
Grandmamma's wedding went off beautifully. The bride "looked lovely," everybody said, in her rich sky-blue silk, made with a pointed waist, with low neck and short sleeves, and trimmed with real old Valenciennes lace. Her neck was adorned with a rich brocade scarf of soft harmonious green and blue, which reached nearly to her feet, and encircled with a string of virgin pearls; and literally, "in pearls and roses gleaming," my grandmamma presented her finger to be encircled by the wedding ring which she herself had seen cut from a guinea. I will not attempt to describe the great wedding-supper, nor to tell how they danced until midnight the stately minuets and the graceful contra-dances, winding up with a cotillon, which, as it had only lately come into favor, and but few of the guests could dance it, was considered a very brilliant feature indeed. I may as well tell you, though, that the shoe-buckles which great-grandpapa wore on the occasion were afterwards made into a pair of sugar-tongs, which,

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being presented to the bride, are still preserved in the family as a precious heirloom. I told you that the story was hardly worth telling; but don't you think that mine was a sweet, as well as a clever little grandmamma, and deserved to have her story told?

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There was once a nest in a hollow;
Down in the mosses and knot-grass pressed,
Soft and warm, and full to the brim:



MAY 19TH.

"Good night!" said the hen, when her supper was done,
To Fanny who stood in the door,
"Good night," answered she, "come back in the morn,
And you and your chicks shall have more."

MAY 20TH.



There's a merry brown thrush sitting up in the tree,
"He's singing to me! He's singing to me!"
And what does he say, little girl, little boy?
"Oh, the world's running over with joy."

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